

BETWEEN THE CENTURIES
AND OTHER POEMS

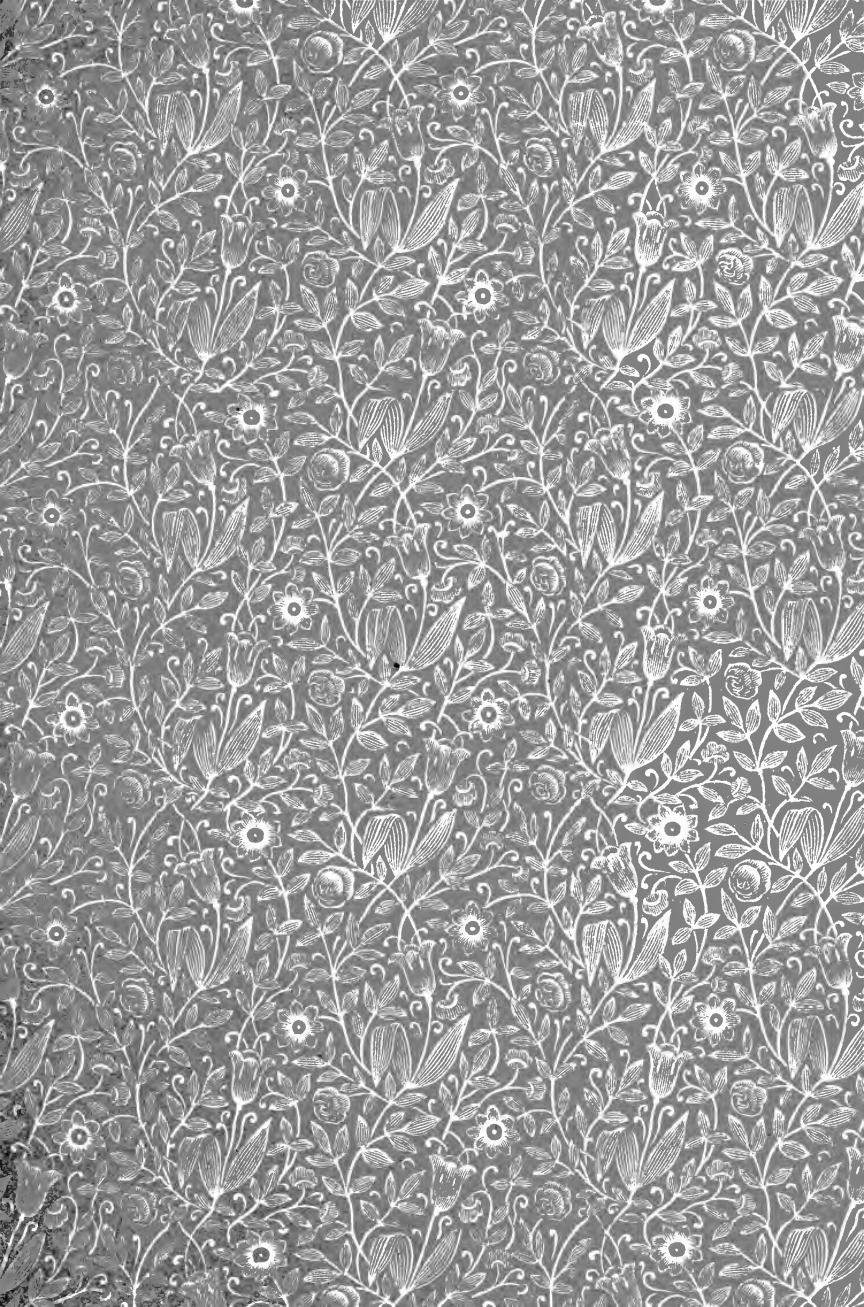
JANE MARIA READ

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BETWEEN THE CENTURIES

AND

OTHER POEMS

BY

JANE MARIA READ



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PROEM.

FOR those who think life's common thought,
Who claim no learned, massive mind,
These fading, wildwood flowers are brought,
May-flowers and violets, here entwined.

I see the common toil, and tear,
And hear the tread of plodding feet ;
Thus come to me, through eye and ear,
Impressions which my songs repeat.

If humble men may pause, to heed
The transient fragrance of these flowers ;
If those who toil may pause to read,
And find a rest in weary hours,

It is enough ; no more I ask.
Since Fancy's dream, or earnest thought,
Have cheered the toiler at his task,
I have attained the good I sought.



BETWEEN THE CENTURIES.

TWO men were passing through a village street.
This one, with furrowed brow, long, snow-white
hair,

And flowing beard, was like the trees we meet

In dim old forests ; trees whose strong trunks bear
The marks of storms that beat on them in vain ;
For life's rough storms, again and yet again,
Had burst on him, and then had passed away,
Revealing glories of departing day.

That one was proud and dark and full of thought,

With footstep firm, and eye whose glances keen
Would never quail in hours with danger fraught,

And hand to wield the sword with regal mien.
A heart that faltered but at deeds of wrong,
For truth and right remaining leal and strong,
Beat in his breast, as beats the surging sea
On the long shore that skirts the rocky lea.

The man of years looked ever on the past,

And each new scene recalled it to his mind ;

The young man's thoughts were on the future cast ;

Conversing, thus, the two were oft combined.

They paused at length beside a crystal stream,

And each was silent, busy with his dream.

Some moments passed and then the old man spoke,

And words like these upon the stillness broke, —

“Walking through the quiet street

That I often wandered down,

Years ago, with glad, young feet,

When the world seemed fair and sweet,

Many scenes of old I meet

In this calm New England town.

“Pausing by the brooklet's side,

Where I oft have paused before,

Narrow, now, the waters glide,

That I thought the rolling tide

Of a river, vast and wide,

In the happy days of yore.

“As the waters onward go,

Rippling, dashing, whirling, fleet,

Soft their murmurings whisper, low,

Stories of the long ago,

Told in hours that tender glow,

When the day and evening meet.

“Mid these tales of old, that dart

Through the brain and pass away,

One there is with magic art,
For it speaks, and tells the heart
How each patriot bore his part
In our country's new-born day.

"When the brave stood firm and true
In that time of hope and dread,
Farmers bade their wives adieu,
Left their harvests where they grew,
Waving 'neath the bending blue,
Marched to war with hurried tread.

"But the folks must eat or die ;
So the miller stayed at mill,
Ground the corn and wheat and rye.
Yet he murmured with a sigh,
'Others fight! Why may not I?'
Tossed in spirit as the rill.

"Then his wife, courageous, said,
'I will tend the mill for thee ;
Thus the hungry shall have bread :
May our Father o'er your head
Watch in love.' Away he sped,
Softly saying, 'Pray for me !'

"Lingering in the door, she stayed
Till he passed the distant hill
And was hidden in the glade,
Where the strong oak's pleasant shade

Caused the sunlight's gleam to fade ;
Then she turned her to the mill.

“ So the women reaped the grain,
And the old men bound the sheaves ;
And in sunshine and in rain,
Little children, down the lane
Drove the cows safe home again,
Waving whips with willow leaves.

“ Till at last the war was o'er,
And through valley, over hill,
Joyful marched the troops, and bore
Banners rent, and stained with gore ;
And the miller came once more
Home to Mary and the mill.”

He paused, and then resumed in thoughtful tone,
“ A hundred years have well-nigh passed away ;
And as those years on swiftest wings have flown,
How much of good has fallen to decay !
The brave, firm hearts that fought for truth and right,
The strong, true hands that bore our colors bright,
The men who toiled to make our freedom sure,
And records left that ever shall endure,
Where, where alas ! are now those heroes brave ?
They're gone as zephyrs gliding o'er the plain ;
Gone to the cold, the dark, the silent grave,
To wake no more at freedom's pleading strain,

Or raise their voice in darker hours of need
When vice shall thrive in bold and dangerous deed.
True men have saved thee, country of my birth ;
Then weep to lay their cherished forms in earth."

" Ah ! yes, my friend," exclaimed the dark-eyed youth,
" Let not those deeds be buried in the dust ;
But, still, some hearts there are of changeless truth,
Some precious gems preserved 'mid cankering rust.
Think not, because the fathers pass from earth,
The sons forget their deeds of lustrous worth.
Now hear the vision I have seen today,
While you thus dreamt of scenes long passed away.

" I gazed upon the streamlet's flow,
I heard its ceaseless drone ;
The sunlight gleamed with gentle glow,
And every wavelet whispered low,
In soft and singing tone.

" And, fast as glides that sparkling crest,
My thoughts have drifted fleet ;
Strange fancies rise within my breast,
A thousand dreams, a wild unrest,
A sound like tramping feet.

" I know a time of dread draws near ;
Low lies the leaden cloud ;
And every heart is filled with fear,

Lest, soon, in gloom, our freedom dear,
The darkness may enshroud.

“No hope remains within my heart ;
The flesh is faint and frail ;
While, from the noiseless shadows, start
Wild, chilling doubts that swiftly dart,
And cause my cheeks to pale.

“But lo ! one comes and speaks to me ;
‘Come, follow where I lead.’
We wander over hill and lea,
Through crowded streets, along the sea,
Unseen, with silent speed.

“As thus we pass, I see this sight,—
That Christians kneel in prayer,
And plead that Freedom’s hand of might
May bear aloft a fadeless light,
Kept by their Father’s care.

“And, when the Sabbath evening bell
Rings out its solemn call,
Those prayers, like waves that landward swell,
The earnest, heartfelt pleadings tell
That come alike from all.

“Then spoke my guide in accents low,
With sweet and silvery tone,

Those prayers to God's great throne shall go ;
His arm is mightier than the foe ;
His ear attends each moan.

“ He spoke, the clouds crept far away,
The tempest passed us o'er,
I saw the brooklet's restless play,
And, in the peaceful summer day,
The sun shone forth once more.”

In silence, then, they watched the parting smile
The sun threw backward past the wooded hill ;
The gray rocks answered with a blush the while,
And crimson tints adorned the gliding rill :
The beauty faded, and they turned their feet
As calmly fell the shades of twilight sweet ;
They passed away as men have passed before :
They came, they paused, and then were seen no more.

THE SOURCE OF WISDOM.

COME, ye gleams of peaceful light,
Shimmering moonbeams silver white,
Touch my pen with magic power ;
Give me words to sing aright
Of the world, the field, the flower ;
Come and whisper words of love,
Soft as clouds that pass above.

Give me words of wisdom, true,
Golden like the stars we view
Moving up the eastern sky —
Words that fall, like Hermon's dew,
Silent on those summits high.
Canst thou grant it, orb of night ?
Canst thou teach my hand to write ?

Hark ! I hear a gentle word,
Soft and sad and scarcely heard,
" This my power cannot bestow ! "
Past the flowers, by breezes stirred,
From the nooks, where violets grow,
Breathes a wavering, transient sigh,
And the tender wind-notes die.

Come, ye waves, that roaring leap
In the ocean vast and deep,

Grand thou art with awful power,
Wild the storm-tossed billows weep,

While the tempests o'er thee lower,
Tell me where my heart can find
Words to bless all humankind.

And the ocean hushes low ;
O'er its waves the moonbeams glow ;

While a murmur greets my ear
From the waves that ceaseless flow ;

“Heart, look heavenward without fear,
But above the moon's cold light —
Far beyond the stars of night.”

Then the breezes, passing by,
Whisper, “Look beyond the sky ;

God, creator of the flowers,
Who beholds the blossoms lie,

Bright with dew in morning hours,
Will to thee send Wisdom's word,
In his fair creation heard.”

WILFUL PEGASUS.

I HAE a steed, wi' gleaming wings,
And mane as bricht as gold,
But oft, when I would take a ride
He will na be controlled.

He comes to me, in storms that beat
Direct fra land of snaw ;
And, neighing, shakes his coltish head ;
And looks sae very brau,
I mind nor sleet nor biting wind,
But mounting at his ca',
Full many bitter rides I hae,
Led by this steed awa'.

Again, when owls are out at nicht,
Pegasus neighs to me ;
And, at his will, I take my ride
Across yon moonlit lea.

Then, when the summer roses smile,
And woo the zephyrs sweet,
I ca' in turn, but strange to tell,
He lifts his golden feet,
And skims across the fields, indeed,
But leaves me far behind ;
Ah ! beautiful and wingèd steed,
I canna' make ye mind.

Then wonder not I sing sae oft
Of storms and driving snaw ;
I tune my harp when, round my form,
The stinging tempests blaw.

I fain would ride when suns are warm
And sing a gladsome song,
Until the mountains, far awa',
The echoed notes prolong.
I fain would ride in daylight brau,
But, since I canna' then,
Just when that pony wills to gae
I take my rides, ye ken.

AS YE SOW YE SHALL REAP.

ALONE in the woodland I wander,
Till I come to a laughing brook ;
Then sink on the soft moss, to ponder
On the words of a little book.

At last, 'mid the shades and the gleaming,
That, like fairies, are dancing there,
I yield to the bird-songs, and, dreaming,
Glide afar from life's toil and care.

I haste on the swift wings of slumber,
And again, as in childhood, climb
Gray rocks and the long piles of lumber,
With the children of other time ;

Or bound o'er the sand, as the morning,
With a tender and smiling grace,
O'er mountains and forest-tops dawning,
Brings the day to the world apace.

The waves, ever rolling and roaring,
In the sunshine are sparkling free ;
And birds o'er the billows are soaring,
Or are swooping to meet the sea.

I dream of the fair, happy faces,
And the tones that I loved to hear ;
Each charm of a home's hallowed places,
With the song and the merry cheer.

While, deep from the murmuring ocean,
To my ear there is borne a tone ;
It speaks through each wild wavelet's motion,
"Ye shall reap as ye each have sown."

Some sleep in the churchyard, where ever
Dirge-like winds breathe in mournful woe ;
Some toil in their patient endeavor,
As they onward and upward go.

Yet ever the same is the reaping
As the seed that was strewn abroad ;
Some gather the harvest with weeping,
Some in gladness receive the reward.

I wake in the dim forest olden,
And I still hear the bird-songs gay ;
The sunbeams are playful and golden
As they dance with the shadows gray.

But ever the oak trees are vying
With the pines as they ceaseless moan,
And sadly their branches are sighing,
"Ye shall reap as ye each have sown."

EASTER.

YE sweet, dreamy days, when the bright crocus blossoms

Make fair, with their presence, the yard by the door ;
When trailing arbutus fills woodlands with fragrance,
And snow-storms of winter at last are all o'er ;
I greet thee with song, and I join in a chorus
Of bluebirds and robins that warble thy praise,
While woodpeckers patiently peck at the maples
Rejoicing at heart for the long, sunny days.
I greet thee, and think thou art only an emblem
Of what we shall know when our life-time is o'er ;
When cares and afflictions, like tempests and snow-storms,
Shall come to oppress us and chill us no more.
There fair, tender blossoms, that fade not forever,
Shall gladden our sight ; and an anthem of praise,
Where angels, not bluebirds, shall herald the glory,
Will welcome the saved to the long, sunny days.

For like the sweet flowers in the gladness of Easter,
Expanding and breathing a fragrance around,
Where recently seen were the ice and the snow-drifts,
When e'en the green leaflets were under the ground ;
So, after this earth-life, shall grow, at the bidding
Of Him who can speak to the man or the flower,
A life more resplendent, more fragrant and holy ;
We wait, dearest Father, our glad Easter hour.

THE TWO VESSELS.

TWO vessels sail adown the bay ;
Around them both the small waves play ;
They pass beyond the silent fort
As if they sought one common port ;
As if they ne'er should parted be,
By widening distance, on the sea.

But one to sunny lands will go,
While one will seek the clime of snow ;
And who can tell, if, side by side,
Those vessels e'er again shall ride ;
If both shall come, from far away,
To rest together in the bay.

Two lives are passing side by side,
And o'er the tide of time they glide ;
But duty, soon, apart shall rend
The clasping hands of friend from friend ;
And none may say what change shall be
For hearts that sail life's restless sea.

But when, in years to come, at night
The fires are burning warm and bright,
Oh! tell me! to the port of home —
Where oft, in thought, each heart will roam —
Will both return to meet us there,
And leave no void, no vacant chair?

The breeze blows freshly o'er the bay;
The elm's long boughs above me sway;
A bird, in plaintive music, grieves,
Far up amid the rustling leaves;
But while yon snow-white sails recede,
Nor waves, nor birds, my question heed.

THE PATH BY THE STREAM.

WHERE the mill stream floweth,
With waters murmuring low,
Where the west wind bloweth,
Where the green grass groweth,
I stroll with footsteps slow.

There the moonbeam bendeth
To kiss the gurgling stream ;
There the forest lendeth
Music old that blendeth
Amid my wayward dream.

Now the pine tree sigheth,
In solemn, saddened tone ;
Now the birch replieth,
Then to silence dieth ;
I hear the waves alone.

Fields of life before me,
With fairy flowers are dressed ;
Blue the heavens bend o'er me ;
Whispered words implore me
With nature here to rest.

Time is onward going,
With ceaseless, noiseless tread ;

Still the stream is flowing,
Still the ferns are growing,
Beside its narrow bed.

But, where once the grasses
Were bright with morning dew,
Now a dry road passes,
Crushing down the masses
Of tender violets, blue.

Life's stern calls obeying,
No fields, with flowerets dressed,
Feet of mine, delaying,
Woo to idle straying,
In search of transient rest.

Rough the path unfolding,
By bleeding feet bestained,
Life, through hardships, moulding,
Till its end beholding,
I reach the unattained !

WORK AND REST.

A SWEET and gentle murmur meets my ear ;
I seem to hear the angels' hymns of praise ;
I catch a whisper, "Do not linger here,
But from the dust thy fellow beings raise."

I kneel and humbly ask for help to bear
My part in life's great field of ceaseless toil ;
I ask the heart that other's griefs will share,
And, willing, work upon neglected soil.

O ! give me not, I pray, a haughty mind
That scorns the lowly and neglects the weak,
But grant that I may truest pleasure find
Amid the poor, with spirit kind and meek.

And, Heavenly Father, grant my willing heart
May lean on thee through all my changing life ;
Then grant, when I at last have done the part
Thou givest me, release from toilsome strife.

And when upon my pillow I shall rest
My head, too weary for this world of sin,
Then, at my loving Father's kind behest,
The gate of Heaven shall ope and let me in.

Thus having passed my life with childlike trust
In that dear Christ whose blood was shed for me ;
My treasure, far beyond the reach of rust,
Shall ne'er grow dim throughout eternity.

THE VOICE AT TWILIGHT.

ON the breeze that came from westward,
Borne along like songs of birds,
Floating 'mid the darkening shadows,
Rose and fell these thoughtful words :

“ As the twilight gently falleth,
And the cares of day are o'er ;
Through the stillness, come to cheer me
Thoughts of loved ones gone before ;

“ And my mind is filled with longings
For the deeds of tender love
That they ever freely gave me,
Ere they passed to worlds above.

“ Through the sombre, deepening shadows
Come their accents back to me,
And those forms, which long since vanished,
Round me once again I see,—

“ See my father sitting near me ;
And my mother, bending low,
Soothes my storm-tossed, weary spirit,
While the sun's last gleamings go.

“ Brothers gather once more round me,
As in days long past and gone,

While my sisters' voices mingle
In the peaceful evening song.

"Now the thoughts come slowly to me
Of the way my feet have trod,
And I bow my head, and murmur
Prayers of thankfulness to God.

"For his hand has ever led me,
And his way was ever best ;
Though he took my loved ones from me,
Up in heaven with him to rest.

"And I pray, Oh, Father, guide me,
Lest my feet should go astray ;
Watch my faltering footsteps ever ;
Keep me in the narrow way.

"When the day of life is over,
When its twilight hour has come,
Then, I pray thee, take my spirit
To its bright, eternal home.

"There, with loved ones will I praise thee,
Where no night of gloom shall be,
Where shall come no pain or sorrow,
Through a vast eternity."

As the words were wafted to me,
On the quiet twilight air,—

Yearning words and mournful memories
Blending into thankful prayer ;

Strongly thrilled my soul within me,
Thinking he who is Divine,
Calms the tumult of our sorrow,
When our hearts to him incline ;

Thinking, how, when friends are taken
To the peaceful, heavenly land,
Christ can fill our hearts with fullness,
Walking with us hand in hand.

SINGING IN THE RAIN. 8.

OUT in the rain, the dripping rain,
A little robin sings
A song of love, a sweet refrain,
As to the twig he clings.
He sings, "Good-night, I go to rest,
Good-night, good-night, I seek my nest,
Secure I sleep,
In darkness deep,
My wing above my crest."

Out in the storm of care and pain,
My heart, O Father, sings
A pleading song, a sweet refrain,
And peace and trust it brings.
I sing, O Lord, I seek thy breast,
On thy sure promises I rest ;
Thy power can keep,
In darkness deep,
And make that darkness blest.

DEEDS DIE NOT.

I SEE the flowers, unconcious, throw
Their fragrance on the sighing breeze ;
A sweetness wafted to and fro,
A trifling thing but sure to please.

And then I think our influence moves
Adown the years that glide away ;
Yet not like transient flowers it proves,
That bloom and then as soon decay.

Our forms may fade as fade the flowers,
But deeds live on when they are gone —
The careless acts of thoughtless hours —
To meet us on the Judgment morn.

GRINDING AT THE MILL.

DIMPLING and rippling, in its glee,
A brook flows laughing on its way,
And, as its restless haste I see,
I cry, O lovely brooklet, stay !

In yonder valley is a mill,
Where loads of grain thy waves must grind ;
To turning heavy mill-wheels will
Thy merry course be soon confined.

Sweet violets softly plead with thee,
“O linger still amid the fair ;”
And, singing in the mountain tree,
A choir of birds makes music rare.

But still I hear the dreamy flow
Of waters gliding down the hill,
And think of many friends I know
Whose lives are grinding at the mill.

They wake to toil with sunrise ray,
They yet must toil till life is o'er.
How strange, I think, the happy day
Of childhood can return no more!

But stranger that the bashful child
Should wish to hasten from the years
On which a loving Savior smiled,
When joy soon dries the falling tears.

As thus I dream, the brooklet near,
Of life, and toil the lot of all,
A serious tone I seem to hear,
Mingling with laugh of waterfall.

Was it a naiad murmured low?
Or silver wave with accents sweet?
"Far better than no care to know
Is toil that grinds the heavy wheat.

"Far better grind the life away
That souls may feed on golden grain,
Than live in mirth our little day,
Regardless of their hunger-pain."

THEY SING TO ME.

LITTLE orphan Alice
Came, one sunny morn,
To see the downy chickens,
Scattered o'er the lawn ;
Close beside their mother,
Shone her curly head,
While all the timid chickens
Wild with terror, fled.

So we called to Alice,
Bade her come away ;
But, casting glances backward,
Reluctant to obey :—
“ I won't hurt the chickies,”
Plead the eager child ;
And then her baby features
Brightened as she smiled,
While, in artless prattle,
And in childish glee,
Her sweet persuasive accents
Said, “ They sing to me ! ”

Often near the chickens,
Through the summer hours,
We saw the golden head,
Amid the golden flowers ;
Oft to God a prayer
Rose, from out my heart,
“ The orphan’s wondrous blessing
To the world impart.”
Cradle-song she heard not,
At her mother’s knee,
But, turning to the chickens,
Said, “ They sing to me.”

BEAR THY CROSS.

WHEN thy burden presses heavy,
And thy heart is worn and faint,
Take thy cross up meekly, Christian,
Lift it up, make no complaint.

But remember, pressing onward,
Up the toilsome, weary road,
If thou'lt cast it on thy Savior,
He will take the heavy load.

Murmur not, when long and lonely
Seems thy pathway here below ;
'Tis a cross to bear for Jesus,
Canst thou not receive it so ?

If thy flowers have thorns beneath them,
If they fade away and die,
Murmur not, for their Creator
Made them so, and knoweth why.

If thy friends are taken from thee,
Though thy heart has loved them true,
It can bear the cross for Jesus,
Giving only what is due.

When the hearts of those thou lovest
Far above thy love for gold,

Trusting, watchful, ever tender,
In return grow stern and cold, —

Though thy heart may sink within thee,
Worthless seem the world and vain,
One there is who changeth never ;
Take thy cross, do not complain.

In the garden, dark and gloomy,
Once the blessed Son of God
Suffered bitter pangs of anguish,
And his life-blood stained the sod.

Once a heavy cross he carried ;
Once upon that cross he hung,
Sweet the words that reach us, falling
From our loving Savior's tongue :

“Take the cross and follow after,”
These the words we hear him speak,
“Lift it and I'll help thee bear it,
Well I know that thou art weak.

“When thy crosses all are taken,
I will give thee mansions fair,
And a crown of glory radiant ;
Conquerors' palms thy hands shall bear.”

THE CHANGED VALLEY.

IN the peaceful valley,
Where the streamlet flows,
White-eyed daisies blossom,
And the violet grows.
Walking through the meadows,
Resting near the stream,
Held by wayward fancy,
Golden was my dream.

Through the valley straying
Once in after days,
Where the whirling water
Wends in devious ways,
I beheld a roadway
Winding through the grass.
On a bridge of cedar,
O'er the stream I pass.

Pausing there, I wonder
At the changes made ;
Leaning on the railing,
Looking down the glade.
Golden dreams I dream not
As the waters flow,
Now in noisy ripples,
Calmer now and slow.

Fond remembrance lingers
'Mid the merry past,
Like the brooklet's murmur,
Silver-toned at last.
But the dusty roadway
Is an emblem true
Of the toilsome journey
Earnest lives pursue.

LEGEND OF WATCH HILL.

IN dreamy, careless mood I stroll
Beneath Watch Hill and note the roar
Of swelling, crested waves, that roll
And break in foam-wreaths on the shore.
With half-closed eyes I idly view
The sails expanding in the breeze,
And, in the distant, hazy blue,
The level isle of Manisees.
And now the accents of my friend,
In grave tones, sound like bells that chime
At twilight, very far away,
Some tune we loved in olden time.
A story of the long ago,
That grave, sweet voice repeats to me ;
A story colored dark with woe,
And dirge-like as the wind-tossed sea.
“ Before the white man’s hand had set
The beacon light upon the hill,
With raven hair, and eyes like jet,
A maiden sat there lone and still.
Her lover’s light canoe has gone
Beyond the isle of Manisees ;
She comes to watch for him at dawn,
She stays till blows the evening breeze,
And every day she watches true ;
But nowhere o’er the waters vast

Glides back again the swift canoe ;
Though some so like her lover's passed,
They raised her expectations high.
Hope fell again ; and from a tree
Came forth the mourning dove's low cry ;
She sighed and gazed across the sea.
And day by day her eyes grew dim,
And day by day her cheek turned pale ;
And sometimes she would sing of him,
Ending the song with plaintive wail.
At length the maiden came no more,
But sadly closed her eyes in death.
And those who tell the story o'er
Add, in a solemn underbreath,
That thus the name Watch Hill was given."
The story told, through tears I see
The lighthouse reaching high toward heaven
And sunbeams smiling gloriously ;
But, in the ocean's plaintive roar,
I fancy I can hear the moan
Of her who died upon the shore,
Of him who died at sea, alone.

RETRENCHMENT.

[At the Baptist State Convention in Worcester, Mass., in 1875, the Rev. Dr. Cushing said, "Retrenchment has a dismal sound to the ears of a missionary." The following lines were suggested by these words.]

I HEAR on every breeze that blows
The moan of many nations' woes ;
And o'er each wave that shoreward rolls
Is borne the knell of dying souls.

"How long, how long," I hear them cry,
"Must souls immortal, thirsting die?"
How long? how long? The echo floats,
In mournful, earnest, pleading notes.

Can we refuse them needed aid,
For selfish pleasures, soon to fade?
Ye Christians, search your hidden thought:
Are not those pleasures dearly bought?

For us the joy, for us the light:
For them the doom of hopeless night

Ah ! if to those on heathen ground
"Retrenchment" has a dismal sound,—

How will it sound when we shall stand
Before God's presence, just and grand,
And hear the solemn sentence given
That seals our doom, or grants us heaven ?

LEAD ME.

O, FATHER, I am lost !
By sin and sorrow tossed.

Lead me, I pray,
Back, through the shades of night,
To thy own heavenly light
And narrow way.

My heart is worn and faint ;
O, hear my pleading plaint,
My God, my trust.
Make me thy own true child ;
Lead from the desert, wild,
Barren with dust.

THE FADELESS.

WHEN the flowers of spring-time
 Blossom near the way ;
Let their graceful beauty
 In thy memory stay.

Then when autumn cometh,
 With the mournful breeze ;
When the leaves of crimson
 Fall from all the trees ;

Like the west wind, seaward
 Blowing o'er the lea,
Will return the freshness
 Of the spring to thee.

In thy young days joyous,
 If a Savior's love
Draw thee near and nearer
 To the world above ;

Then when life is fading,
 Like the leaves that fall,
Joyful will thy spirit
 Hear the homeward call.

THROB ON, O SEA.

THROB on, O Sea, with deepened roar,
Repeat thy moaning o'er and o'er,
Resounding back from shore to shore.
From rock to rock, along the sand,
Thy waves surge wildly on the land,
In full, impressive anthems, grand.

Throb on, O Sea, in solemn woe,
Throb on, while storms shall o'er thee blow ;
Throb on, while suns shall on thee glow.
Deep hidden 'neath thy heaving breast,
There seems a longing after rest,
However rough thy tossing crest.

Throb on ! an emblem true thou art
Of changing tides, whose waves upstart
And fill the restless human heart.
Man reaches out his soul to thee
And, moved by thy rich melody,
His lips reply, "Throb on, O Sea !"

AS THE DEW UPON HERMON.

THE dew descends upon the mountain's height
Amid the solemn stillness of the night.
No sound bespeaks its falling ; but the world,
Round which the silken robes of sleep are furled,
Shall wake at morn to see a thousand drops,
Like diamonds, sparkling on the mountain tops.
Each flower that drooped beneath the scorching sun,
Each leaf that withered when the day was done,
Refreshed at dawn, shall all its grace renew,
And prove the silent blessing of the dew.
I saw a Christian toiling on his way,
And drooping 'neath the noontide's burning ray.
A brother, passing, marked his weary look,
And pointed kindly to God's Holy Book ;
Another spoke a word ; another bore
A trifle from his burden ; and no more
The load seemed heavy, for the kindness grew
Into a silent blessing like the dew.

LOOKING HEAVENWARD.

WEARY of all on earth below
My faint heart needs repose ;
I scarce can keep the narrow way
Until my life shall close.

I look beyond the gloomy grave
To streets of shining gold,
And ask the gentle Shepherd's care
To lead me to the fold.

Through silent shades of eventide,
There comes a blessed word,
"Have faith, my child, and thou shalt find
Thy prayer of trust is heard."

Thy words, O Shepherd kind and true,
Are like a cheering ray ;
They guide, through shades of earthly night,
To never-ending day.

GUIDE ME THROUGH NIGHT.

THE night comes on, the lonely night,
And I am in the desert wild.
How drear and dark the night of doubt
Comes down, when daylight fadeth out,
And clouds obscure the moonbeams bright.
Then, Father, guide thy weary child.

I raise my eyes to heavenly hills,
To hills that shine with glory fair ;
To him whose power avails to keep ;
Who slumbers not in night-shades deep.
When all around my spirit chills,
I raise my voice in suppliant prayer.

My going out, my coming in,
From this time forth the Lord shall guard ;
The sun shall never smite by day,
Nor moon at night with evil ray ;
And he will shield from doubt and sin,
Though foes shall press my spirit hard.

PROTECTION.

WHEN the wild gale sweeps the billow,
When the light breeze waves the willow ;
In the sunlight's tender glow,
In the darkness, in the snow ;
In affliction's deepest gloom,
As we near the the silent tomb,
Ever strong, a Father's arm
Keeps the Christian soul from harm,
Makes his rugged pathway bright,
Guiding safe to worlds of light.

THE HIGHEST AIM.

ALL the fair objects in God's world of wonder,
Are framed to execute his sovereign will ;
Mountains, whose cliffs reverberate with echoes,
The wavelets glancing down the rippling rill,
Meadows and orchards, and the glad young robin,
The bee that murmurs in the cherry bloom,
Violets, that blossom in the pleasant woodland,
Arbutus, trailing 'neath the pine's gray gloom.

Man has no higher aim, no loftier mission,
Than working wisely in the same sweet ways :
Doing the will of him who rules in heaven,
Obedient as the birds, as full of praise.

THE STAR.

OVER the woods the twilight
Rested, with shadows gray ;
Over my soul a stillness
Gathered, at close of day.
Then, in the cloudless azure,
Glistened a star, that grew
Brighter and ever brighter,
Up in that wondrous blue.

So in my hours of sorrow,
Fain would I see a light,
Glowing amid the shadow,
Making the darkness bright ;
Then, when the Father's summons
Calls me from earth afar,
Grant me, thou King of Glory,
Faith like a guiding star.

THE HAVEN GAINED.

BILLOWS in tumult, near the haven dashing,
Toss, in their wrath, a vessel bound for home ;
Over its sides the rolling waves are plashing,
Breaking and falling into spray and foam ;
Meeting near shore are tides of fearful power,
Each, in its pride, would rule the restless sea ;

Seaman are toiling through the midnight hour ;
 Danger is there, and awful majesty.
But, over all, that one his watch is keeping,
 Who, by his word, on storm-tossed Galilee
Calmed all the tumult, waking from his sleeping,
 Chiding alike the tempest and the sea.
Reaching at length the welcome port, and gazing
 Fondly on happy homes along the shore,
God, and his love the seaman's heart is praising,
 For at God's word the billows roll no more.
Fair was the landscape to the sailor, weary
 After his labor through the gloomy night ;
After the danger, 'mid those shadows dreary,
 Glorious appeared that haven, bathed in light.

Fair is the harbor where the spirit, resting,
 Sings in its joy ; the toilworn Christian's home !
Meeting this side, two tides their strength contesting,
 Crown their vast billows white with seething foam ;
Yet, though the billows o'er the soul are sweeping,
 Tempests shall rise no greater than our strength.
God at a word can change to joy our weeping,
 We shall behold our heavenly home at length ;
And when the Christian sees the radiant morning
 Break on his sight, the haven gained at last,
Charmed with the glory, will he hail the dawning
 Brighter because of dangers bravely past.

THE MIDNIGHT VOICE.

A VOICE comes through the silence
Of the lonely hours of night,
And speaks to my struggling spirit,
With firm though gentle might.
It calls to lands beyond the sea,
Where dusky forms bow low the knee
To idols dumb, of wood and stone,
And deem it right.

With clear tones, downward wafted
From beyond the starlit sky,
It seems, in my hours of waking,
To be forever nigh ;
It steals upon my hours of sleep ;
In dreams those tones their influence keep ;
“ Go, teach all nations, far and near,
Before they die.”

Thou knowest best, my Father,
How to use the willing soul,
And how o'er a restless spirit,
To keep a firm control ;
And, be the cross to go or stay,
Thou grantest strength in thine own way,
And still unchanged thy love remains
While ages roll.

THE SONG-SPARROW.

AH! little sparrow, near my window singing,
Trilling sweet music on the summer air,
Thou knowest not what thoughts thy song is bringing ;
Sweet singer, thou, and free from fear and care.

I see thy restless wings that often flutter
As if thou fain would'st leave thy place of rest,
And wonder, Art thou thinking ever fondly
Of her who broods today upon her nest ?

Thinking of her, but not as I am thinking
Of those whose wants are ever near my heart ;
No doubts perplex thee while the sunset lingers
As if reluctant from the hills to part.

No blue, no scarlet plumage art thou wearing,
No golden crown adorns thy modest crest ;
And yet, of all the birds that come to cheer us,
I think, ofttimes, I love the sparrow best.

Humble, like her who gave her scanty living,
Like her remembered in the Holy Word,
Thou comest, year by year, to teach the lesson
That God is not forgetful of a bird.

Come often to my window, gentle sparrow,
Sing out thy happy song and know no fear ;

Until my faith grows stronger for thy coming
Knowing our Father, in his love, is near ;

Until, amid my cares and daily labor,
I learn to sing with thee a song of praise,
And, with a thankful heart, no longer borrow
One trembling thought of fear for future days.

PASSING.

OUR moments are passing away ;
They are gone ere we know they are here ;
And our days, in their rapid decline,
Roll round to the close of the year.

They go like the soft-falling dew
'Neath the rays of a bright noonday sun ;
Till the years of our lives are all passed,
Till their toils and their trials are done.

AWAY.

TO the shore of the tossing sea,
Where the wavelets glance in glee,
With wild, sweet melody,
I come today.
I hear the ocean's roar ;
Its waves beat on the shore ;
I see the ships pass o'er,
Away, away.

Long I watch the snow-white sails
As they fly before the gales :
The foaming, glistening trails
On blue waves play.
They fade from out my sight
On restless billows, bright
With sunbeams' golden light,
Away, away.

While alone I sit and dream
In my fancy, I see the beam
Of beauteous blue eyes gleam
In roguish play,
And garments white as snow
Pass lightly to and fro,
And then away they go,
Away, away.

Now I see a dark eye flash
'Neath its heavy, silken lash,
A noble spirit dash

In th' lustrous ray.

The manly brow is gone,
Like dew on Summer morn,
Like rosy flush of dawn,

Away, away.

And I ask, with a throb of pain,
If they ever come again,
O'er life's tempestuous main,

Homeward some day ;

Will friends come back as true
As those who, from our view
Have passed with fond adieu,

Away, away ?

But the ocean's sullen tone,
With its ceaseless murmuring moan,
Replied to me alone

On cold rocks gray ;

And from the great cliff's side,
Upon the ebbing tide,
An echo fell and died —

Away — away !

GOD HEARD.

O H ! consider, maiden gay,
Careless as the woodland bird,
When you turned, in jest, away
Thoughts of Heaven and Judgment day ;
God, thy Maker, heard.

Tell me, man of power and pride,
Dreamt you that the scornful word
Which God's holy name defied,
Fell not earthward at your side ?
God in heaven heard.

Christian, as you rise from prayer,
All your heart with feeling stirred,
Live and move with watchful care :
For each word of promise fair
God, thy Father, heard.

You who have no sheltering rest,
Listen to a warning word :
Flee to seek the Savior's breast ;
Never cry, from soul oppressed,
Was'by God unheard.

THE WELCOME.

THE shadow falls, the sunlight gleams,
The days make up the busy year ;
But down the rain or sunny beams
The whisper floats, " She is not here."

She is not here ; when will she come ?
When will she come ? She is not here ;
So ring the spirit-bells of home,
And downward drops the bitter tear.

But now they ring a merrier chime,
She comes at last ! She soon will come !
The phantom-bells, in gayer time,
Ring welcome, love, oh ! welcome home !

IN THE WOODBINE.

TWO little sparrows are building a nest,
 Busily building and singing ;
Here and away flits a crimson crest ;
 Each sparrow a straw is bringing.

Two little sparrows have finished their nest ;—
 Beautiful leaves droop above it ;—
Lined with soft down from a living breast,
 We see how the birdies love it.

Four little mouths for the sparrows to feed,
 Eight little wings that are growing ;
Patient, the parents supply their need,
 While June's mellow sunlight is glowing.

Gone are the birds from the empty nest,
 Vainly I list for their singing,
Vainly I watch for a crimson crest ;
 No bird to the vine is clinging.

Summer again with its June may come ;
 Birds may around me be singing ;
None will return to the empty home,
 Up there in the woodbine swinging.

FIFTY YEARS.

FOR A GOLDEN WEDDING.

[Composed at the request of Mr. V. E. Whitcomb, of Littleton, Mass., from his own calculation of the number of months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, and seconds, contained in fifty years.]

FIFTY years have glided swiftly
And we still behold together,
Two who now pass down life's hillside
In the gold of autumn weather.

And the months six hundred passing,
Bore them onward without ceasing ;
And the weeks were twice a thousand
By six hundred more increasing.

Eighteen thousand and two hundred,
Were the days of mirth and sorrow ;
To which sixty days were added,
Days with nights that closely follow.

Hours four hundred thirty thousand,
Plus eight thousand and three hundred,
Have they lived in loving union,
And the bond has not been sundered.

Twenty-six the million minutes,
To which add, as thus we count,
Twice one hundred fifty thousand,
Less two thousand, the amount.

We must pause before the seconds,
For a billion meets our eyes ;
Added here five hundred millions,
And the numbers higher rise.

So we pause in silent wonder,
And we let the curtain fall,
O'er the years with changing seasons,
And the memories we recall.

Who can count the years in moments ?
Years of joy and years of pain !
Mirth and sorrow bound together,
Clasped like links in golden chain.

Vain attempt to paint the beauty,
Or the sadness, of the years !
Each one sees his own life better,
Smiling at it through his tears.

GOD KNOWS BEST.

WITHIN this world of doubt and fear,
Where care and sorrow hover near,
We find no rest.

Tossed on the wild and boisterous wave,
Striving the battling storm to brave,
How we the soothing sunshine crave !
Yet God knows best.

Though borne o'er waves all white with foam,
The storms may drive us safely home
To ports of peace.

'Trust, then, the Lord through every hour,
Trust though the darkening tempests lower,
Till, at his word of sovereign power,
The darkness cease.

MY FRIEND.

THE brooklet murmured at my feet,
In careless, sportive play ;
The odor of the pines was sweet,
That hovered o'er my way ;
I heard a partridge near me drum,
I heard an insect's busy hum,
But with these sounds I fain would blend
The presence of a loving friend.

O, little rill, so wild with glee !
Where would thy limpid waters tend ?
How different is the brook from me !
It hastens on to meet a friend ;
I, sitting on a moss-clad stone,
And wrapt in gloomy thoughts, alone,
Where all things else seem filled with mirth,
Look sadly on the smiling earth.

Again I hear the partridge drum ;
The birches' twinkling leaves reply ;
The peaceful twilight shadows come ;
And stars hang out their lights on high.
Then comes the thought, I heavenward tend
To hold communion with a friend,
In whom my spirit's griefs shall be
Lost as the brooklet in the sea.

IN WINTER.

WHEN winter fields are white with snow,
And forest boughs are brown and sear,
How oft we think our earthly life
Is, like the prospect, cold and drear.

But soon the spring shall wake to life
The flowers that sleep beneath the ground,
And even now some tended flower
Within the window may be found.

So heaven shall bring eternal spring,
With joys that ne'er shall fade again ;
And e'en our saddest hours may yield
The tended flower of hope in pain.

BABY ASLEEP.

GERTIE LILLA FOGG.

THE baby has fallen asleep !
Asleep to the world and its woes,
To pain and all sorrowful tears,
To cares and temptations and fears,
As pure in her slumber so deep,
As fair as the fair tuberose.

But God, in his kindness, will take
The baby to heavenly rest,
And love her with tenderest care ;
And safe in his own country fair,
The Savior who died for our sake
Will make for our birdie a nest.

Oh ! wipe the hot tears from the eye,
And bow in submission to God ;
He gives and he takes from our hearts,
But comfort his Spirit imparts ;
Then trust that in heaven, on high,
Is the soul ; and not under the sod.

DEPARTING DAYS.

O H ! for the years to live again —
Those years which never backward turn —
That we might nobler things attain,
And wisdom's lessons learn !

Dreaming, we see the days glide past,
Like leaves upon a river borne,
And think not they are gliding fast,
Until, too late, their loss we mourn.

We see them go as crimson sky
That fades and passes from the west ;
We, smiling, watch them as they die,
And, when we lose them love them best.

Wake, careless souls, ere all are passed !
And dream no more your golden dreams ;
The stream of time moves still, but fast,
And death is nearer than it seems.

THEY SHALL BE MINE.

“THEY shall be mine.” The tender words
Are borne from realms beyond the skies ;
A promise rich with glorious hope,
Which fills the soul with sweet surprise.

How often, through the passing years,
When we from friends afar must stay,
For such strong love our spirits yearn
To cheer us o’er life’s rugged way !

And, as we long for one to trust,
A friend to say, “Thou art my own ;”
Behold the gracious words that come
E’en from our Heavenly Father’s throne.

It is enough, our souls respond,
If thou wilt claim us thine indeed ;
Though all forsake thy patient care,
Thy love supplies our every need.

ÉLÉONORE.

HEAVING with deep and sullen roar
The proud waves wash our rock-bound shore ;
Proudly our ships at anchor ride,
Or on the darkly tossing sea,
With banners floating joyously,
Afar they glide.

Wildly the night-winds fill the sails,
And cheerly blow the morning gales ;
Brightly the sunbeam's golden light
Looks down upon the dark green waves,
Where men have sunk to watery graves,
For truth and right.

Safely they sleep ; and let them sleep,
While all the friends who loved them weep,
 Wailing with tones of sorrow low.
But, ye, the vanished fair who mourn,
Lament for one whose life has borne
 A weight of woe.

Could'st thou, O Sun, the secret gain
Of hearts that beat and throb with pain,
 Sailing 'neath snow-white sails unfurled ;
Well might thy orb refuse to rise,
And shine resplendent from the skies,
 On such a world !

Heard you never wondrous stories,
 Told by lips that speak no more ;
Told when winter's gathering twilight
 Rests in shade on wall and floor ;

When, around the fireside gathered,
 In a dreamy, careless way,
Backward turn the wheels of memory
 To some long forgotten day ?

Aged hands together folded,
 Busy once, but now no more,
Patient face, with wrinkles, dearer
 Than the fairer face of yore ;

Thus, I see the pleasant picture,
 With the children gathered near,
And the voice which spoke with trembling,
 But with low, sweet tones, I hear.

Rare, old stories of the exiles,
 Brought from Erin's island shore,
She had told us very often,
 And again she told them o'er ;

Stories told of English people,
 And of some from unknown strands,
Who, with clinging, true affection,
 Ne'er forgot their native lands.

One among those plaintive stories,
 And the saddest of them all,
Never fades from memory's tablet,
 Every word can I recall.

She, whose grave is on a hillside,
 Just below the woodland, seen,
Covered now with snows of winter,
 In the summer fresh and green ;

Is the one whose story lingers,
As the perfume of the rose
When its falling petals wither,
When its beauty slowly goes.

Years ago she crossed the ocean,
When a friendless, timid child,
Exiled by her cruel kindred,
Sent to die in regions wild.

Though so young, she well remembered
Sailing over stormy seas,
Where she saw the ocean islands,
Tropic flowers, and orange trees.

But her home was like a vision,
With its halls and parlors fair,
Pleasant lawns, and rows of shade trees
Waving in the summer air.

Éléonore some scenes remembered,
Which could never fade away ;
One, the entrance of a stranger,
Old and ugly, bent and gray.

Sees she often, in the doorway,
That tall form ; and, like a bird
Croaking only ill-voiced omen,
So his evil voice is heard.

“Thou art merry, little maiden,
Bright thy smiles as morning sun,
But, thy heart, with sorrow laden,
Oft shall ache ere life is done ;
Throb with sorrow,
Dread the morrow,
Count the moments, one by one.

“Far across the stormy billows,
Borne from home by stranger hands,
Oft thy tears shall wet the pillows
Thou shalt press on foreign strands ;
Worn and weary,
Dark and dreary
Pass thy life in distant lands. ”

Then she hears a sweet voice, saying,
“Never, while my life is given,
Shall my darling leave her country,
Never from her home be driven.”

And again she hears her mother,
With a loving voice, and mild,
Singing tender cradle verses,
As she soothes her weeping child.

“ Cease thy sobbing, baby sweet ;
Mother’s care will guard thy feet,
Never let thee fall.

“ See how close her arms can hold thee ;
To her bosom fast infold thee,
Mother’s loved, her all !

“ Cease this throbbing, little heart ;
Rest, my child, for safe thou art
On thy mother’s arm.

“ Bosom white, oh ! stay thy heaving ;
Stay, thou cherry lip, thy grieving ;
Thou shalt know no harm.

“ Come, sweet sleep, to claim my child,
Calm her fears of danger, wild ;
Give her quiet rest.

“Angels guard her, ever keeping
Watches o’er her, while she’s sleeping
In her cradle nest.”

Tender words are these, which quickly
Calm her transient, childish fears ;
Words which never are forgotten,
In the lapse of changeful years.

Afterward she sees those features,
Peaceful, as if fast asleep ;
Paler than she ever saw them ;
And she hears the mourners weep ;

Sees the long procession going,
And the plumes the horses wore,
Hears the music’s mournful dirges,
Passing slowly on before ;

Hears the voices of the servants,
Chanting, in a solemn tone ;
They, to whom the truer worship
Of the Savior is unknown.

They, who, with a lack of learning,
Have no lack of heart-love, deep,
For the dead, and for the orphan,
As they chant their prayers and weep.

“Ave Mary,” the servants prayed,
“Low in the ground is our lady laid.
Watch o’er her slumbers, sweet mother of good,
As watches the hen, o’er her tender brood.
Ave Mary, this prayer we pray,
Take thou our lady to realms of day.

“Ave Mary,” they sang at dawn,
“Guard thou our lady’s child forlorn.
Cruel the hands which her life control ;—
Yet grant thou peace to her mother’s soul ;—
Ave Mary, this prayer we pray,
Take thou our lady to realms of day.

“Ave Mary,” they sang at eve,
“Pity the orphan, left lonely to grieve ;
Weeping she mourns for her mother dear ;
Wipe from her eye-lids the bitter tear.

Ave Mary, once more we pray,
Take thou our lady to realms of day."

Soon there came a hurried parting,
Where were given no farewell words ;
Then long tiresome days of sailing ;
Then the islands filled with birds.

There the captain fain would leave her,
By the birds and fruits beguiled ;
Tried to tempt with brilliant blossoms,
But could not delude the child.

Though those flowers were graceful growing,
Though the tropic fruits were sweet,
Little tempted they the maiden,
Clinging to the captain's feet ;

Clinging wildly, tearful pleading,
" Take me with you I implore ;
I will only live to serve you,
Toil to serve you, evermore."

Down beneath the brutal nature
Of the captain, rough and stern,
Moved a truer undercurrent ;
From that face he could not turn.

Twice, and thrice, he tried to leave her,
And fulfil his pledges vile ;
But her cries and tears are victors,
So he bears her from the isle ;

Brings her to our winter snow-storms,
And our hard and rocky soil ;
Leaves her in the new-born country ;
Leaves her to a life of toil.

Here her white hands learned to labor,
And the passing of the years,
Brought her many friends to love her,
Brought a solace for her tears.

Here, when grown a blooming maiden,
She became a sailor's wife,
Living in a humble cottage,
All her later years of life.

And the sailor sailed the ocean,
Till his brow by age was seamed ;
Then the two, together, often
Of their past lives talked, or dreamed.

When the winds were wildly blowing,
When the shore was strewn with wrecks,
Then they thought of men who perished,
Swept by storms from reeling decks.

And they gave the orphan welcome,
And the exile kind relief ;
For they knew the orphan's sorrow,
Knew the lonely exile's grief.

Long ago their earth-life ended ;
E'en the cottage has decayed ;
And the moss-grown stones, no longer
Mark the graves where they were laid.

Those who heard, with me, the story,
Now are scattered far and wide,
Or have passed from life, in silence,
Over death's mysterious tide.

In their sweet and trembling accents,
Now the dear lips move no more,
Which have often told the story,
Of the orphan, Éléonore.

TO ELLA.

A CROSS the distance, wide, between us falling,
I heard the silver Yule-bells chime today ;
And then I listed, for I heard you calling,
Like plaintive bird that sings at twilight gray.

O Yule-tide dear ! wi' licht and shadow blending ;
Wi' words o' cheer frae hearts that sairly weep ;
An' thochts o' luve in trembling accents ending !
What gift mair dear than sic true luve to keep ?

Nae need hae I dear frien' o' bonny token,
Nae need o' gowden clasp or jewel rare ;
The passing years are like a chain unbroken,
Which binds my heart to thine, and holds it there.

I ken how frae fu' heart thy prayer is going,
I ken the cry, that wings aboon its flight ;
An' down my cheeks as weel the tears are flowing,
The while I pray that God may send thee licht.

Out frae these shadows surely he will lead thee ;
Hae thou no thocht the Faither means thee ill !
Ask thou great things, assured that he will heed thee ;
An' ken, aboon the cloud, he sees thee still.

BEYOND THE CLOUDS.

THE clouds hovered dark o'er the heavens,
With fold lying heavy on fold,
And close came the wind to the casement,
And whispered, "The world has grown cold."

The pines, with their tremulous branches,
Swayed mournfully slow as I thought,
And up from the banks of the river
A sorrowful murmur was brought.

O spring-tide of life-time ! I murmured,
The sun has gone out of thy sky !
And even thy silver-voiced rivers,
Through shadows flow mournfully by !

Some loved ones were called from our fireside
While glowed the first flush of their prime ;
And some, who were carefully cherished,
Have passed from the burdens of time.

And where is the lining of silver
To the clouds of the life, or the sky?
There is nought but the gray of the storm-cloud,
As it sweeps like the Death-angel by.

Even then as I looked to the heavens,
Those cloud-banks were parting in two,
And never before had I witnessed
A deeper, more beautiful blue.

Even then, through my doubts and misgivings,
Came a promise of God to my heart,
And it shone there with glory as radiant
As the beams of the sun can impart.

THE SONG OF THE BREEZE.

THE breezes, softly sighing
Through summer's flower-decked vine,
Just lift the branches, lying
Athwart the window low,
Where morning-glories twine,
And honey-suckles grow.

I listen to the breezes ;
Their fragrant breath is balm ;
Their every motion pleases,
And soothing is the song,
That fills the thoughts with calm,
And makes the heart grow strong.

And, though no voice has power
To tell the story, fair,
I heard that summer hour ;
Its words were full of cheer,
And left their influence rare,
To quiet doubt and fear.

FRIENDSHIP'S TOKEN.

THE pleasant word in lightness spoken
The merry soul of wit may move ;
But ill affords a lasting token
In every change which life may prove.

The word of wisdom, soul-inspiring,
Can never turn to give us pain ;
But leads instead our steps, untiring,
To rise and seek a higher plain.

The words my hand is rudely tracing
Shall not be words of idle jest,
Which, for a time these pages gracing,
Will not withstand of years the test.

With wisdom's words I have not power,
And yet some tribute I would bring ;
If not a gem, at least a flower,
Which bears the freshness of the spring.

May earthly treasures, golden glowing,
More precious make one pure pearl given ;
And friendship's flowers, in beauty growing,
Remind of fairer flowers in heaven.

THE LESSON OF THE STARS.

I HAVE gazed at the stars in their beauty,
In the cold and frosty night,
And have almost felt there was pity
In their soft and mellow light.

From the evening heavens, resplendent,
Those stars smile down on me,
To cheer me through time's dark pathway,
Till I come to eternity.

Thus my life, I feel, has a mission,
And like stars may cast a glow
On the lives that are lost in darkness
And grope in grief and woe.

As those stars with their gladsome sparkle
Send down their cheering ray,
There goes from my heart its sorrow,
And my sad thoughts pass away.

So I would that I might strengthen,
By word or kindly deed,
Some heart with a greater sorrow —
Some soul with a sorer need.

Then my prayer ascends to Heaven,
In the cold and frosty night,
That the Lord may bless my effort
To make some burden light.

And my own griefs fade and vanish
Like mist 'neath noonday sun ;
And my heart grows strong to labor
Till all life's tasks are done.

RAIN-DROPS.

IN the early, spring-time falling,
Comes the misty, cheerless rain ;
But the clouds shall part asunder.
And the sun shine forth again.

Fair, indeed, the April sunbeams
Rest on opening bud and flower ;
Not less useful are the raindrops
Falling in the April shower.

Fair as sunshine are the moments
Spent in joy and merry cheer ;
Yet, perchance, a truer blessing
Comes when falls the silent tear.

Falling, slowly, down the features,
Drop the signs of soul-felt grief,
Till our Father sends the sunshine
Of his love, which brings relief.

So, while rain-drops still are falling,
We must wait for sunny hours ;
Trusting, in the storm of sorrow,
For the passing of the showers.

NEAR, THOUGH UNSEEN.

WHERE the silent moonlight glimmers
Through the shade of oaken leaves,
Stands a child, with arms outreaching,
After one for whom she grieves.

In the dark her hands are hidden,
But the mellow moon-beams grace,
With their lustre, every feature
Of her lovely, saddened face.

Listen to her plaintive pleading :
“Father, take me to your arms.”
Soon he stoops, from out the darkness,
Calming all her strange alarms.

See, he clasps her to his bosom,
Speaking in a tender tone ;
Gently wipes away her teardrops,
Saying, “Thou art not alone.”

Like the child the Christian reaches
Into darkness, blank and drear,
After God who soothes his sorrow,
And, unseen, is drawing near.

NOT LOST.

A FLOWER, with heart of gold,
And fragrant dewy breath ;
A friend, with golden hair ;
Both drooped at touch of death.

The blossom was not lost,
For, in the soul's deep vase,
We kept its petals rare
And all its odorous grace.

The friend, with snow-white hand,
Is beckoning us to heaven,
Though only to our dreams
That lily-hand is given.

Though, 'neath the coffin lid,
Her cold lips move no more,
Her loving accents call
From the celestial shore.

And thus her influence comes
To cheer life's toilsome way,
While in the path she trod
We follow day by day.

FLOWER LESSONS.

WHAT shall we learn from the flowers we see
Scattered through forests, on hillside, or lea?
Each has been sent by the Father above,
Each of them teach us that kind Father's love.

Robed in the blue of the beautiful sky,
Nestled in mosses, the violets lie,
Smiling and graceful, with fragrance replete,
Covering softly the oak's rugged feet.

Child of the spring-time, from thee we may learn
Never, with spirit complaining, to spurn
Humblest of duties by God's wisdom given,
While we, in faithfulness, press on to heaven.

Brighter in beauty, the rose, in its glow,
Breathes forth its perfume wherever we go,
While, on the air is its gentle tone heard,
When by the breezes its petals are stirred.

Sweet are the beautiful notes of the song
That maketh the heart of the listener strong,
"Courage!" it murmurs, "for every sphere!
God sends the dew-drops the roses to cheer.

"Sends he not dew-drops to cheer the faint heart?
Does he not daily his blessings impart?
Sends he not often the soul cheering shower,
Like the cool rain-drops which gladden the flower?"

Fragile, pale lilies droop low on their stem,
Wafting us lightly a message from them,
Tremulous words that are borne on the breeze,
Over the hedges and under the trees.

"Bend, when the tempest is fierce in its might;
Over the clouds is the sun beaming bright;
Darkness and sorrow may last for a day,
Fairer the sunshine that drives them away."

LIKE THE DAISIES.

BEAUTIFUL daisies, with hearts of gold,
Teach me the charm of your blossoms white ;
Tell me the secret you lightly hold,
Half concealed from my mortal sight !

Did an angel whisper, in accents sweet,
Tidings of hope in the daisy's ear ?
Tell me the words, while my heart-throbs beat
More and more softly that I may hear.

Sometime, methinks, in the long ago,
Over the daisies the Savior trod,
Bending the flowers 'mid the grasses low,
Bending them down till they reached the sod.

Gently they yielded, content to lie
Under those holy, toilworn feet ;
Never presuming to question why,
Never aspiring to lot more meet.

Sometime the Master may pass my way,
 Bidding me bend to the brown earth low ;
Then let me lie, like the daisies I pray,
 Close to the ground, if he wills it so.

Then let me rise, with a brow serene,
 Peacefully smiling on all who pass ;
Just as the daisies, with quiet mien,
 Smile on the world from among the grass.

THE VIOLET'S PORTION.

BESIDE a stream whose waters clear
Were shadowed by the forest shade,
I paused, the tuneful sounds to hear,
Of nature's music in the glade.

Then sweetly flowed that tuneful song
As brook and bird took up the strain ;
The breezes wafted it along,
The oak tree breathed it to the plain.

Though music filled my inmost heart,
I hushed my voice, untuned to bear
In nature's harmony a part ;
For nature's life is free from care.

I stooped to catch the silver sounds
Of praises chanted by the stream,
When, glancing idly on the ground,
There flashed a light like diamond's gleam.

A single drop of water glowed
 Upon the petals of a flower, —
From changeful waves which gaily flowed —
 A crystal caught to deck the bower.

Its grateful influence haunts me still ;
 Grant me, I pray, the violet's part ;
To catch enough of joy to fill
 The calix of my thirsty heart.

LED BY A STAR.

THE sweetest Christmas story
I ever have been told
Is that of eastern sages,
Led by the star of gold.

How eager were their faces !
What rapture lit each eye
Which saw that orb of beauty
Adorn the eastern sky !

Then patiently they journey'd
In silence of the night,
Till Judah's ancient turrets
Greeted afar their sight.

The king they found in splendor,
But not the new-born child ;
Was this for what they journey'd,
And passed through dangers' wild ?

As, slowly, from the palace
The wise men turned away,
That star of lustrous splendor
Led with its kindly ray.

And, while they quickly follow,
It moveth on before ;
Then, at the Savior's birth-place,
Stands still—its mission o'er.

I love this tender story ;
And think, there is a star
Which beckons us to follow,—
I see it from afar.

And far from sin and sorrow
That star, with influence sweet,
Will guide us, if we heed it,
Direct to Jesus' feet.

And if you, too, would offer
A gift like those of old,
Give to the poor who shiver
And pine in winter's cold.

"It is to me ye give it,"
I hear the Savior say ;
And shall we not remember
Christ's message, Christmas day?

IN THE FUTURE.

WHAT is yonder in the future?
Lift that mystic veil away;

Let the morning sunlight golden

Fall on shadows grim and gray,
Of the doubts and fears we borrow,
Of the death-chill and the sorrow,
Hovering round our lives today.

Tell us, is there not a glory

In the onward-gliding years?
See we not, beyond our toiling,
As we gaze through falling tears,
Fondest hopes and rosy vision?
Is there not some field elysian
Which the glowing sunlight cheers?

Is there not a mountain summit

Where all mists shall lie below?
Where is seen the silver lining
Of these clouds of earthly woe?
Is there not a living fountain,
Welling ever in that mountain,
Decked with flowers that fadeless grow?

Ah! that veil of lightest tissue!

Let us lift it with the hand;

Why should that obscure our vision,

Stretched like mist along the land?

Vain is all our wild endeavor;

Lightly droops the curtain, ever,

Just before us where we stand.

And, beyond that phantom curtain,

Hiding thus our future lives,

Are the hopes the years are bringing,

And the crown for him who strives;

Are the hours of labor, weary;

Barren deserts, lone and dreary;

Gardens, where the rose-tree thrives.

THROUGH PATIENCE.

NOT all at once the small bird builds ;
She builds from day to day.
She does not wait for fifty shreds
When one is in her way.

She takes the shred her bright eye finds
And works with tireless will ;
She works with patient, hopeful trust,
But toils with all her skill.

A little here, a little there,
She finds enough at last ;
Her nest is built where leafy boughs
Will shield it from the blast.

A lesson great, a lesson good,
From her our hearts may learn ;
The smallest gift which God bestows
No inward thought should spurn.

Not all at once he sends his gifts,
But sends them one by one ;
Then let us toil, in quiet faith,
Till life's great work is done.

And while we trust, as trust the birds,
Through years that glide along ;
Like happy birds that warble praise,
Our hearts shall speak in song.

THE WEDDING GIFT.

MAID, with hair of sunny hue,
Eyes of heaven's own melting blue,
Cheeks as soft as rose's leaf,
Lips so pure their touch is blest
To the friends that love thee best ;
Leaving now the dear home nest,
May thy heart be kept from grief ;

Throbbing heart, that for the new,
Bids old scenes and friends adieu,
Going with its chosen mate !
Angels guard thy path through life,
Keep thee safe from want and strife,
Making thee a faithful wife ;
Blessings ever on thee wait !

Nought of gold or gems I boast,
From some distant island coast,
Into thy fair hand to give.
Only love my heart extends,
Following where thy pathway wends,
Praying, when life's toiling ends,
Safe above, thy soul may live.

THOUGHTS OF PARTING.

STRANGELY sad are thoughts of parting
That oppress my mind tonight ;
Coming as the shade of twilight
Closes down on sunset, bright.

Dark as ebon wing of raven,
Though unbidden, still they come ;
Heavy is the spirit's burden
Leaving cherished friends and home ;

Home replete with richest blessing,
Bright with flowers and sweet with love ;
If our feet return not hither
Shall we meet these friends above ?

Cheering thought ! if we together
All might meet in heaven at last,
Going forth no more forever,
When our partings here are past !

REST NOT IN LIFE.

I STOOD alone, beside the rolling sea,
And, from the waters, voices came to me,
Nor full of noisy, light and blithesome glee,
Nor sad and full of woe ;
But from each wave, with snowy foam-cap crowned,
Came to my ear the same low, lingering sound, —
“Thy heart has much to know.”

The same words came, in measured tone and grand,
As each vast, heaving billow neared the land,
Then, rising, dashed in anger on the sand,
Returning to the deep ;—
While, from each swiftly ebbing wavelet's breast
Rose, as with one accord, “Stay not to rest,
Thou must not pause to sleep.”

I look afar o'er time's fast-flowing tide,
I see the friends I loved far from me glide ;
Their voices come, through distance growing wide,
“This life is not your rest.”
And all the world seems saying to my soul,
“Work for thy Master while life's years shall roll,
In this shalt thou be blest.”

THE WATCHMAN ASLEEP.

DARK is the night and cold the blast ;
The wild wind shrieks as it hurries past.
Away, away on its light wings, fast
It flies o'er the tossing sea !
The sailors look for the star in vain ;
They walk the deck in the falling rain,
And storm-winds sweep o'er the waves again,
Laughing loudly in noisy glee.

Sleeping, alas ! in the bitter night,
Is he who tendeth the beacon light ;
And morning dawns on a fearful sight ;
A wreck 'mid the rolling waves.
Alas ! for those who have perished here !
Fond hearts will ache and forget their cheer,
And the eye grow dim with the falling tear,
For the dead in the ocean graves.

Hearts in this world look oft on high
For stars of hope in their troubled sky,
They see them not, and in darkness die,
And sink to a world of woe!
The beacons true upon life's rough sea,
Oh, Christian worker, are kept by thee ;
Then trim thy lamp, that the world may see ;
Let its bright flame ne'er burn low.

Watchman, awake and haste on high !
Some ship in the darkness is sailing by ;
Some souls at morning as wrecks may lie
'Mid the rocks of sin and crime ;
Even now, fast floating from good away,
They drift afar from the hope of day,
On the deep rolling waves of time.

GOD CARES FOR THEE.

LOW dropped the curtain of the night ;
Peacefully fell the moon's fair light ;
Then on the air of evening broke —
Though there appeared no form that spoke —
A voice that moaned in misery
The cheerless words, "None cares for me."

The daylight dawned with sunny smile,
As if it would from care beguile
The troubled hearts of busy men ;
Yet seemed the maid to hear again,
Amid the crowd that thronged the street,
"None cares for me of all I meet."

All through the toiling of the day
The weary words pursued her way,
And, when at eve she sought for rest,
Still rose the question in her breast,
Who 'mid the crowd so lone might be
That he could say, "None cares for me."

In the deep watches of the night,
Uncheered by e'en the stars' cold light,
She knelt and prayed a Father's love
Might fall in mercy from above,
And bless the souls, where'er they be,
Who say or feel, "None cares for me."

She paused, and on that midnight air
Arose a sound like music rare ;
And then a voice made answer low,
"God guards the birds through winter's snow ;
And wheresoe'er his children be
Each one can say, 'God cares for me.'"

FOUND WANTING.

GRAND was the feast in Babylon the great,
Golden and silver vessels graced the board,
Splendid with jewels were the robes of state,
And sparkling crimson wine was freely poured.

Haughty the visage of the sinful king ;
The servile courtiers loud their voices raise ;
And, swelling high, the acclamations ring,
“Long live the king ! unto the gods be praise !”

Then spake the king, in arrogant command,
“Bring me the silver vessels and the gold,
Which in the Jewish temples used to stand
Before my father brought them thence of old.”

What evil spirit, in his willing ear,
Whispered the motive for so bold a deed ?
While still the dark lords shout with cheer on cheer,
“Long live the king ! The king’s commandments heed !”

They drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold,
They praised the gods of iron, wood, and stone ;
When in that very hour, — Behold ! Behold !
There on the wall part of a hand alone !

See how it swiftly writes and goes away,
But leaves strange words in writing on the walls.
Pale grows the king, and trembles with dismay
As wildly his astrologers he calls.

His thoughts are troubled those strange words to see.
"Whoso," he cries, "shall make the meaning plain,
Third ruler in the kingdom shall he be,
Clothed rich in scarlet, with a golden chain."

The wise men came ; the writing could not read ;
And ghastlier grew the visage of the king.
What were to him his gods in time of need ?
What consolation could his honors bring ?

Then came the queen into the banquet hall ;
And said to him, "Forever live, O king !
Let not these troubled thoughts thy soul appall,
But to thy counsel Judah's Daniel bring,

"He whom thy father master made of all
Chaldean sages, and magicians bold.
He shall disclose the message on the wall,
To thee the hidden meaning shall unfold."

Daniel was brought, and thus Belshazzar said,
"If thou canst read and make the meaning plain,
Thou shalt be third in rule when it is read,
Clothed rich in scarlet, wear a golden chain."

“Let thy gifts be thine own and not to me,
Yet will I read the writing to the king.
Thou offeredst not to God a suppliant's knee ;
No humbled heart was thine, but thou didst bring

“The vessels of his house and drank thy wine,
In worship of the gods of brass and gold.
Thou hast not glorified the Lord divine,
Knowing God's power, of which thou hast been told.

“This is the writing : ‘ Ended is thy reign ;
Weighed in the balances and wanting found,
Thy kingdom is divided for a gain
To Medes, and Persian hosts encamped around.’

“Weighed in the balances of God, O king,
Thy rank, thy riches and thy pride are light ;
And nought avails the praises courtiers bring,
All worse than worthless in Jehovah's sight.”

Sadly Belshazzar gave his last command ;
He knew the meaning of the words too late.
In dreams that night he sees the writing hand
That seals the doom of Babylon, the great.

But ere he slept he bade the heralds go
Proclaiming Daniel third in all the land.
He hears the trumpets which those heralds blow,
But only sees the writing, and the hand.

They clothed the prophet with the scarlet bright,
They put upon his neck the golden chain ;
But, ere the morning sun brought earth his light,
Belshazzar, proud Chaldea's king, was slain.

ECHOES.

AS the crested waves of ocean
Beat upon the shore,
Falling on the polished pebbles
With continuous roar ;
So our lives are full of motion,
And each word we say,
Mingling with the voice of millions,
Echoes on for-aye.

CRADLE MEMORIES.

WHY wept you o'er the cradle
In the attic put away?
Was it for the broken places,
For the scars and dust-coat gray?

We sat within the twilight,
And she made me this reply,
Drying with her toil-worn fingers,
Tears that filled her aged eye ;

“ I wept not for the dust-coat,
Nor for marks along the side ;
To my eyes there came a vision
Of a little babe who died.

“ I could not see the angel,
As he came one gloomy day,
Bearing from a mother's bosom,
In his arms, her child away.

“ I knew the form grew lifeless,
And the little lips grew chill,
That the hands and feet, once restless,
Now were lying cold and still.

“ The years have brought their changes,
Other children blessed my heart ;
But today I missed my baby,
Felt again the tear-drops start !

“ The rest are men and women,
Strong and noble, brave and true ;
This is still a tender rosebud,
Fresh and fair, and bright with dew.

“ Other hands have marred the cradle ;
Every scar I smile to see,
For, as sunshine through my memory,
Glow's my children's artless glee.

“ I trust that one sweet child-face
Waits me far above the blue ;
Sinful here, I struggle onward,
And the clouds obscure my view.

“ The heavens perhaps will open
And the shadows pass away,
When these limbs, grown yet more feeble,
Enter death's stern portals gray.

“The lamb is in the sheep-fold,
Tended by the Shepherd’s care,
And at night I too will enter,
Well content that both are there.”

My tears were quickly falling
When the story reached its end,
And I laid my hand, in silence,
In the worn hand of my friend.

For my heart, although it sorrowed
For her long abiding grief,
Thrilled with joy to know that Jesus
Comfort gave and sweet relief ;

Throbbled with happy, deep thanksgiving,
That our Father’s thoughts incline
To the lives that we are living ;
That his mercies round us shine.

THE OCEAN'S STORY.

[In memory of Capt. Solon N. Studley, who died at sea, June 26, 1863, aged 45 years.]

MANY stories fraught with sadness,
Issue from the wondrous sea,
Mingling with the gleaming gladness
Of the sunbeam's golden glee ;

Whispers, coming from the ocean,
Far below the surface wave,
Of the tempest's wild commotion,
Of the sailor's watery grave.

To each heart it tells a story
Which no other heart can hear ;
Now of pleasure, now of glory,
And, again, of doubt and fear.

Off Cape Hatteras, sick and dying,
Lay a seaman, homeward bound ;
Overhead the sea-birds crying ;
Ocean's billows all around.

Were there thrills of tender feeling
 Passing through the fevered brain,
Which to kindred hearts appealing,
 Fain would hasten o'er the main?

Did the blue eyes, ere their closing,
 Long to gaze on home once more,
With the twilight shades, reposing,
 Softly, round the well-known door?

None may know what thoughts were throbbing
 Fainter ever in his breast,
As, alone, the billows, sobbing,
 Lulled him into silent rest.

Then, the burial service reading,
 Sailors lowered him to his grave ;
No more mournful dirges needing
 Than the murmur of the wave.

.
Eager hearts with joy were swelling
 Near Cohasset's wave-washed shore,
Loving lips with rapture telling,
 "Father's coming home once more."

For they knew not, close-reefed sailing,
 Swept the ship on homeward way,

With its flag at half mast, trailing
In the pallid moonbeam's ray.

Language is by far too meagre
To reveal the thoughts that come,
As the wife and children, eager,
Wait to speak the welcome home.

And they set the table, saying,
"This will suit the best his taste ;"
O'er each trifle fond delaying,
By the wife and daughter placed.

"Where is father ? " How to sadness
Sink the hopes and joy of all ;
One brief moment thrilled with gladness,
Then the tears of sorrow fall !

Always sad we deem the parting
From our near and cherished friends,
But, from deepest gladness starting,
Deeper gloom with sorrow blends.

God alone has power supernal
To our fragile hearts to say,
"Look ye to the realms eternal
Far above the earthly clay."

Mournful is the story, spoken
From the bosom of the deep,

Murmured forth in accents broken,
Like the voice of those who weep.

Years have passed, and still the ocean
Sings its dirges, o'er and o'er,
With its solemn, ceaseless motion,
All along the sandy shore.

THE CLOUD AT SUNSET.

THE sun, with its radiant glory,
Shone fair over hill and plain,
And passed to the west, at evening,
Far over the fields of grain.

A tender and peaceful beauty
Was given to leaf and flower ;
But downward the sun sunk slowly,
In clouds, at the sunset hour.

How often we see this picture ;
The sunbeams, with golden sheen,
The splendor of summer blossoms,
The pastures and hillsides green !

And life is a day of summer,
Where clouds gather cold and gray
Too often, alas ! at sunset,
Where golden had glowed the day.

But all have the power in life-time

The purest of joy to know ;

And faith in the God of heaven,

With radiant, fadeless glow,

Will fill any life with beauty,

Will fill any heart with light,

Which, never a cloud arising

Can dim, at approach of night.

RUTH.

RUTH looks adown the valley, fair,
A maiden, young and gay,
The sunlight gleaming on her hair
With which the breezes play.

She sees the distant hills of years
Rise up before her view,
Afar removed from griefs or fears,
Wrapt round with azure hue.

The village hides beneath the shade
Of many a leafy tree,
The violets grow within the glade,
The blue-birds sing with glee.

She sings as well, "The years that come
Bring joy to merry Ruth,
Amid the summer bees' low hum,
And friendships of her youth."

And, when the evening grows to night,
She falls in peace asleep,
While moon and stars, with golden light,
Their faithful watchfires keep.

.

When, late in life, time's shadows fall,
And shades of eve as well,
Ruth sits within her stately hall,
Bound fast by memory's spell.

She murmurs forth, in saddened tone,
"My life is starlight's gleam,
Or pale cold light of moonbeam, thrown
Upon the passing stream.

"The hopes and dreams of earlier time
Have faded, like the flowers,
Which droop, where steals November's rime
Through fields and woodland bowers.

"I oft recall a village, fair,
With green and waving trees
That softly moved in summer's air,
That rocked in autumn's breeze.

"I often see the river, blue,
The azure heaven above,

The quiet nooks, where violets grew,
And hear the cooing dove.

“The fish hawk sails across the sky,
The crickets chirp at night ;
Again the clouds of morning, lie
In banks of golden light.

“Oft friendly forms are drawing near,
With hearts both kind and true ;
With cheering smile, or loving tear,
Old friends, unlike the new.

“These all return on memory’s wings,
In hours of night and rest,
When vivid dreams have touched the springs
Deep hidden in my breast.

“Oh, happy hour, of childhood’s morn !
Thy very clouds were gold,
Thy sorrows, like the mists, were gone
Almost as soon as told.

“The friends I loved are passing now ;
I look through shades of time ;
The berries, falling from the bough,
Are touched by autumn’s rime.

“The village falls to slow decay ;
Change creeps o’er all the trees ;
A whisper sad, ‘ All pass away,’
Is borne upon the breeze.”

THE PASSING OF THE YEAR.

WHEN the old year, wrapped
In its mantle of white,
Lies down in its sadness to sleep ;
When the stars, from above,
Throw their radiance bright,
And frost-wreaths o’er window-panes creep ;—

Then there trembles down
From the eyelid a tear ;
We sigh for the good we have lost,
For the May-flowers that drooped
In the spring of the year,
And autumn leaves, seared by the frost ;

For the friends whom we miss
From the circle of home,
Their voices grown silent for aye ;

While on, through the winter,
Like exiles, we roam,
Who fain with their kindred would stay.

But the new year has come
With its glory and pride,
Its beauty, its song and its mirth ;
And we glide in its train
To the future untried,
For the old year has passed from the earth.

THE NARROW WAY.

WE know not what's the path laid out
For weary feet of ours to tread ;
But, if it leads through hope, or doubt,
We still its lengthening course must thread.

And, if our feet are kept through God,
The path will reach heaven's shining gate,
Though leading over rocks, or sod,
And we shall enter, ere we wait.

Not by one upward glance to heaven,
One hour of grief, one day of pain ;
But in the strength that Christ has given,
Through toil, those mansions we shall gain.

And when we pass through death's cold stream,
And leave behind this changeful strand ;
How small life's toil and care will seem !
The joys of heaven how full and grand

So, if the way shall brightly glow,
Or shadowed o'er with darkness be ;
O Lord, where thou shalt bid, we go,
Content, in paths that lead to thee.

SOUL-VOICES.

COULD we, as the snow-flake spotless,
Have our lives from sorrow blotless ;

Could we, as the fragrant flower,
Gather blessings every hour ;

Could we soar, as soars the swallow,
Where no human eye can follow,

Past the clouds, where rolls the thunder,
Upward in the azure wonder ;

Would our hearts grow wiser, better,
Breaking off each earthly fetter ?

Wonders deeper, more mysterious,
Speak within us, wild, imperious,

Till our souls, though dull of hearing,
Pause in silence, waiting, fearing ;

Pause and hear our heart-throbs, saying,
“ List to God without delaying ;

“Thy Creator made thee glorious,
O'er his universe victorious ;

“Much of earth to thee has given,—
Loving him, an endless heaven.

“Need we seek the sky to learn it?
Do not all our thoughts discern it?”

Ah! the souls within us burning,
Reaching forth with ceaseless yearning,

Call on God for every blessing,
Him, and him alone, confessing.

THROUGH PATIENCE, FAITH AND PRAYER.

I WOULD not live a life of mirth,
For soon my soul must pass from earth ;
Nor would I ask for wealth, or skill ;
But goodness, gathering, as distill
The drops of dew at twilight hour,
Refreshing earth with silent power.

And when the light of heaven shall dawn,
When life shall fade, as stars at morn ;
Then I would wish, in that clear ray
That lights the realms of heavenly day,
To see my life-work pure and fair,
The fruit of patience, faith and prayer.

REFLECTED LIGHT.

THE dew flashed back, from leaf and flower,
The sun's resplendent light ;
The ocean's crested wavelets shone
With golden beauty bright ;

The bright clouds hung above the hill ;
I watched them floating there,
And wished that life was like the scene,
As grand, and sweet, and fair.

A blue-bird, under dewy leaves
Half hidden from my sight,
Replied, "The dew-drops, waves, and clouds
Can but *reflect* the light."

I thought of lives which made the earth
More fair each passing day,
And knew that they reflected light
From heaven's eternal ray.

Then, as I turned me from the scene,
I prayed, "Thy beams impart
And brighten, radiant morning star,
My inmost life and heart."

BESSIE'S STORY.

WITHIN the meadow, brown and sere,
I see the children playing,
And Bessie's bird-like tones I hear,
And what the maid is saying.

She tells a story of the sea,
The wide and wayward ocean,
That seems to chant a song of glee
In every wavelet's motion.

"I saw," she says, "oh! long ago!
My father's vessel, sailing
Toward open sea, where golden glow
Of morning skies, was paling.

"But soon his ship will come again,
And I shall watch it nearing,
And see, among the busy men,
My father's form appearing."

Ah! little does the maiden dream,
Her artless story telling,
The waves that soft and tender seem,
Above his grave are swelling.

We build our castles in the air ;
But who can know the sorrow
Whose breath shall wreck their beauty, rare,
Awaiting us tomorrow ?

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE BEE.

[From the French.]

“ IF the day is bright and fair,”
Said the brilliant butterfly,
“ Flitting lightly here and there,
Through the meadows I will go,
Where the gorgeous wild-flowers grow.”
But the wise bee made reply,
“ To my labor I’ll repair,
If the day is bright and fair.”

FIRESIDE SCENES.

BESIDE the glowing flames we sat,
Which on the hearth-stone rose and fell ;
The purring of the dozing cat
Was like the droning of a shell.

The embers into houses grew
And thrones and armies doomed to fall ;
Without, the dreary wind, that blew,
Beat wildly on the cottage wall.

We sung and laughed in merry cheer ;
We told strange stories, fancy dressed ;
And, if we wiped away a tear,
No soul-felt grief our hearts oppressed.

O, happy time, from sorrow free !
O, childhood, with thy golden hours !
Stay yet a little while with me,
Nor fade, as fade the summer flowers.

Long years have glided to their grave :—
Again around the fire we sit,
And on the wall the shadows wave,
While, in the coals, strange phantoms flit.

'Tis like the "scene to memory dear,"

Until we see a vacant chair ;

A woman and an infant here,

Where sat a child with golden hair ;

A manly form, so boyish then ;

And one with beard of silver white,

Which had the hue of midnight, when

We sat and talked that autumn night.

Yet not to thee would we return,

O, Past, with scenes of careless mirth ;

Though, from experience, we would learn

How little all thy dreams are worth.

THE PASSING LIFE.

I AM thinking of the past,
Of its days that glided fast ;
They were swiftly from us borne,
And, although we sadly mourn,
They return no more for aye.
Ah, how soon life flits away !

I am thinking of the years,
What they brought of joys and fears,
Of the loved ones long since dead,
Of the hopes and pleasures fled,
Coming back no more for aye.
Very soon life hastes away !

I am thinking of a home
Far above yon azure dome.
When the Christian's race is run,
And his toil on earth is done,
To that home he hastes away ;
His is an eternal day.

THE POOR WIDOW.

[From the French of Olivier.]

ON her knee my mother took me,—
Who shall tell that mother's worth!
With a loving gaze, so tender,
Sweetest look of all on earth!

Sang my little carol to me,
And my mother sang so well,
Sweetest of all earthly music
Were her words that softly fell;

Said to me, "My child, my poor one,
What, alas, shall be our lot?"
When I shall be grown, dear mother,
Then, these fears, oh! have them not!

A PRAYER.

WHEN amid the busy moments,
Of my life, I pause to pray,
Then I ponder, Can the Savior
Own me for his child today?

All unfit am I to serve him,
With my weak and sinful heart!
Yet, how can I but adore him,
Though I humbly stand apart?

Though I dare not look, with boldness,
To the cross on which he died,
Lest I see the pain I caused him,
Who for me was crucified?

Oh! the wounds, the groans, the anguish,
Given to save my soul from woe!
Oh! the wayward, faltering progress
In the way I strive to go!

Tender love of him, my Savior!
Careless, worldly thoughts of mine!
Till I cry, in deep contrition,
Help me, Lord, with power Divine.

Let me serve thee, though in weakness,
Let me stand in thee, alone;
Asking, through thy perfect goodness,
Thou wilt claim me as thine own.

THE BLESSING.

TENDERLY on the maiden's head
Rested the weary, shrivelled hand ;
Trembled the voice that softly said,
" Bless this child of the household band.

" Dear to her mother make her years,
Passing with noiseless, rapid feet ;
Dry, with thy grace, the rising tears,
Shower around her the blossoms sweet."

Over the child a sunbeam fell,
Lighting her curls of gold-brown hair ;
Songs of the birds from small throats swell
'Mid the hush of the Sabbath air.

List'ning, I think could one like me
Ask for a blessing from whom she would,
Dearer than all would the blessing be,
Falling thus from the old and good.

HEART'S-EASE.

THE pansy bloometh early,
The pansy bloometh late ;
I saw it, in the spring-time,
Beside the garden gate.
I plucked its face-like flowers
The sick and sad to cheer ;
And gave the gathered heart's-ease
To those I held most dear.

Again, in sultry summer,
Within a darkened room,
To give a touch of sweetness
To even Death's chill gloom,
I brought a wreath of pansies ;
And, lo ! they seemed to say,
"Look up to God, ye mourners,
Receive his peace today."

A cross of pansy blossoms
Adorned a village church ;
And one, who came repentant,
Was aided in her search,
And found the Blessed Master
Who loved his children so
He died, to give them heart's-ease,
On Calvary, long ago.

I know that in the autumn,
When other blossoms fade,
And when the early snow-flakes
Fall over hill and glade ;
That then the pansy's blossoms
My drooping bower will cheer.
Ah ! is it then a wonder
I count the pansy dear ?

So when life's summer passes,
And when its autumn comes,
When all its flowers are faded
Where now the wild-bee hums,
Then, if the chill of hoar-frost
My precious heart's-ease spare,
Though rose and lily perish,
I think I shall not care.

ALONE WITH JESUS.

ALONE with Jesus! Sacred is the thought,
And with a holy rapture it is fraught;
To be with him who walked the earth, unstained
By its pollution, always deeply pained
By sin in others, and a victim given —
The Sacrifice by which we enter heaven!

Alone with Jesus! what could be more sweet?
To sit like Mary at the Savior's feet,
To listen to his words by Jacob's well,
Where once those earnest, solemn accents fell;
To feel his touch when on the mountain side,
Or hear his voice rise clear above the tide!

To walk with Jesus, in his saddened life,
Was recompense for years of painful strife.
He is not farther from the souls of men,
But just as merciful and kind as then;
And, still, within the contrite sinner's heart,
The storms obey whene'er he says, "Depart."

We may be sure he hears our spirits cry,
When, in the silence, he alone is nigh,
And wondrous is the love that soothes our grief,
When he alone is near with sweet relief.
The throngs are lonely where he cometh not;
His presence fills the most secluded spot.

Then, could I choose a place supremely blest,
Where I could go, and where my soul could rest,
No flower-decked bower, wind-fanned, my soul would crave,
Or soothing song of bird, or sound of wave ;
Alone with Jesus let my soul abide,
And, weary, in the Rock of Ages hide.

REMEMBER ME.

EVER kindly thou hast led me,
Near the rivers, flowing free ;
In the pastures, green, hast fed me ;
Still, dear Shepherd, lead thou me.

When the shades of twilight, dreary,
Bring the closing of the day ;
When my feet are very weary,
Let thy glory light my way.

Or, if tempests gather o'er me,
Keep my thoughts still fixed on thee,
Thou, who passed this way before me ;
In the storm, remember me.

WHEN YE GANG AWA'.

WHEN ye gang fra fren's awa',
I ' your path may roses blaw ;
May nae cloud o' murky hue
Cross your sky o' brawest blue ;
Yet I ken that hearts like thine
Oft will turn to auld lang syne.

When ye gang sae far awa',
As, perchance, your steps maun fa',
May the licht o' Heaven guide
And aboon ye e'er abide.
This I ween ye canna spare ;
Heed it, or, my fren's, beware.

When, at nicht, the shadows fa',
Barring out the day fra a',
When the bat gaes whirring past,
And ye hark the howling blast,
Ah ! dear fren's, your hearts will ken
Sweet the licht that's fadeless then.

LIGHT IN THE WEST.

CAN aught bring joy, this gloomy day
Of leaden clouds and shadows gray?
A bird, that flew to its peaceful nest,
Warbled the words, "There is light in the west."
Amid the clouds was a golden band
Which showed a skillful Creator's hand.

Can aught give joy in sorrow's hour,
When hope droops sere as frost-touched flower?
A cheering voice, in the troubled breast,
Whispered the words, "There is light in the west."
Reflected far from the sinless shore
Came thoughts of heaven when life is o'er.

O hearts, though clouds the sun obscure,
Yet trust in God's own promise sure;
What he performs we may know is best;
Look! fainting souls, "There is light in the west."
Beyond these clouds there is endless day,
The sky casts earthward the golden ray.

THE GATES OF GLORY.

YONDER lies the deepening sunset,
Rich in purple and in gold,
Amber tints, and crimson glory,
Where the clouds rest, fold on fold ;

But my thoughts are borne beyond them
To the gates that shut out care ;
And I try to grasp the splendor
That awaits my vision there.

Oh, the rapture of such moments !
Willingly the soul would go
To its glorious, happy homeland,
Past the reach of care and woe.

Are not those the gates of glory
Shining in the glowing west ?
Would that they might open quickly !
I am weary, and would rest.

Now the radiance dies, and shadows
 Gather over vale and hill,
And my thoughts come slowly earthward,
 To life's daily good and ill ;

And I am not nearer heaven
 For my spirit's gilded dream,
Only lightened on my journey
 By the sunset's golden gleam.

'Tis by darker ways, and thorny,
 Man must reach the home-land fair,
Sharing first the Savior's sorrows,
 Ere he have the crown to wear.

THE ORPHAN.

[From the French of Mme. A. Tastu.]

WHERE, oh, God, are those thou gavest,
Me to guide?
I, alone, of all the children,
Have no parents by my side.

In my ear a gentle murmur —
“Lift thine eyes ;
For the orphan there’s a Father
Watching from the lofty skies.”

VIOLETS.

OH! sweet are summer roses ;
Her lilies, too, are sweet ;
And so are all her blossoms
Which bloom around our feet ;

But, tell me if you ever
Felt half the joyful thrill
To gather summer roses,
As violets, by the rill ?

The modest azure violets,
Sweet daughters of the spring ;
What memories of childhood
Those little blossoms bring !

When winter storms are over,
And April days are here,
And, when the grass is peeping
From turf, now brown and sere ;

Down by the brook we'll find them
Within their mossy beds ;
The tender, fragrant violets,
Which shyly hang their heads.

And, as we gaze, enraptured,
Upon those blossoms fair,
We'll bow our heads, like violets,
And offer silent prayer.

AFTER THE RAIN.

BEHIND the clouds the sun's bright beams
Have hidden, in silent gloom ;

A presence of sadness and sorrow seems

To steal through the darkened room ;

While winds, with their wailing, wild and long,

Are drearily moaning a dismal song.

The rain-drops, falling thick and fast,

Keep time to the tempest shrill ;

My thoughts are attuned to the driving blast ;

They ever grow dark and chill.

My heart, as it throbs with restless might,

Is groping 'mid darkness and shades of night.

I think of days forever past ;

Of friendships, with broken ties ;

Of hopes that have drifted on Time's stream fast

And left only tears and sighs ;

When lo ! from the west the sunlight streams,

And gladdens my heart with its golden gleams.

Ev'n such are lives that pass on earth,

'Mid storm and 'mid sunshine's glow ;

The heart that smileth with joyous mirth,

Like flowers, in the storm bows low ;

But hope, with its smile, will come again,

And fair be the sunshine that follows rain.

SONG OF THE YEAR.

AS dies the trembling, sad old year,
I hold an hour-glass in my hand ;
And rhythmic sounds I seem to hear,
A chant of mingled hope and fear,
While swiftly falls the shining sand.

Then gazing at the steady flow
That marks the hour which hastes away,
I think Life's sweetest hours must go
Just as the sands that, falling, glow
One instant in the fire-light's ray.

The silver sounds still come to me ;
Perchance the hour-glass sings a song
Its bright sands learned beside the sea,
When winds were blowing cool and free,
And summer days were fair and long.

Perchance the sadness of the strain
Was taught by storms that wildly wept ;
Or, after storms, across the main,
By bits of wreck these sounds of pain
Were borne on waves that shoreward crept.

So life-like are those sounds which flow,
They seem to come from human voice —
A voice that vibrates now with woe,
And now, as die those accents low,
Its tones in gleeful notes rejoice.

O Life, how true this song I hear !
This changeful song that fills my soul !
'Tis not the glass, it is the year
That, dying, sings in accents clear
These rhythmic sounds that grandly roll.

I gather to my heart the past
And think I cannot let it go ;
Its sands still glide with motion fast ;
A moment only will they last ;
An instant in the fire-light glow.

A bell is ringing sadly now ;
It rings the knell of passing time ;
The withered flower, the broken vow,
The death-damp on the pallid brow,
All saddest thoughts, make up the chime.

The glass has emptied all its sands ;
The church bell pauses, and the clock
That, solemn, on the mantel stands,
Now strikes the hour with lifted hands,
And dreams are gone — a scattered flock.

And lo ! the bell rings in the year ;
 I careless turn my hour-glass o'er ;
The winter night is filled with cheer,
And so I wipe the gathered tear
 And on my sorrows shut the door.

The Past outside my casement stands
 And laughs to see the New Year fly ;
Then to the glass and flowing sands
He points with withered, bony hands
 And whispers, " This year, too, must die."

I answer, " That to me is nought,
 If, filled with aspirations true,
I use the hours this year has brought,
And if, by past experience taught,
 More worthily life's deeds I do."

THE LEAF.

[From the French of Arnault.]

LOOSENE from the twig that held thee,
Whither, withered leaf, away ?
That I know not, for the tempest
Broke the oak, my former stay.

Now on changeful breath the zephyr,
Now the north wind onward leads ;
From the mountain to the valley,
From the forest, to the meads ;

Where the wind may bear me, hasting,
Without fear and without grief ;
Going where all things are going,
Leaf of rose, and laurel leaf.

THE SWEETEST MUSIC.

ABROOKLET, playful flowing
Adown the rocky steep
Where ferns are greenest growing
And forest shades are deep,
Makes music, wild and sweet,
Among the trees' rough feet.

The forest warblers, singing
 With many a happy trill,
Their gay notes outward flinging
 As careless as the rill,
Through all the summer heat
Make music, gay and sweet.

Yet, not the brooklet, going
 Its winding, wandering way ;
Nor breath of breezes, blowing
 Amid the leaves at play ;
Nor birds, on pinions fleet,
Produce the tones most sweet.

A baby's laughter ringing,
 A sound of pattering feet,
The lips of childhood singing,
 Make music far more sweet
Than brook, or breeze, or bird
That mortal ever heard.

LINGER.

BID me not farewell in spring-time,
'Tis no time for sorrow's tear ;
Stay, oh, stay, a little longer,
Summer days will soon be here.

Wilt thou say farewell in summer,
'Mid the perfumes of the flowers ?
Linger, now, till autumn bringeth
Sadder scenes and leafless bowers.

Wild the winds of autumn whisper,
But they plead, " Oh, linger still,
Till the snow of winter falleth
White and spotless on the hill."

On the hill the snow came, spotless,
But the tender accents fall :
" Charming are the days of winter,
Why, oh ! why, depart at all !"

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

WHEN Christmas comes, with merry song,
And laden trees, and deeds of love,
My thoughts are not amid the throng,
But with the loved ones gone above.

I think of one, who, Christmas morn,
Was called of God to come on high.
Ah ! fairer was that heavenly dawn
Than any sight to mortal eye !

“ I wish,” she said, in accents sweet,
“ A Happy Christmas to you all.”
How dear the greeting to repeat :
The peaceful features to recall !

In rev'rent voice, to those who mourn,
This Christmas wish my thoughts extend ;
For those are happy, who are borne,
By tempests, nearer Christ their friend.

THE WILD FORGET-ME-NOT.

I PLUCKED a wild forget-me-not,
And sent it to my friend,
And wrote the words, “ The flower will fade,
But love will never end.”

The little flower of palest blue,
With star-like heart of gold,
Was emblem truer than I knew ;
For, motionless and cold,
The form I loved is lying, now,
Where winds of winter blow
And drift, above its narrow grave,
The mantle of the snow.

But often, when the genial warmth
Of summer brings the flowers,
And scatters wild forget-me-nots
Among her sylvan bowers,
The thought will come, to cheer my heart,
I have not lost my friend —
For, though the flowers of earth must fade,
True love will never end.

PERFECT REST.

WHEN shall cease this wild unrest,
Surging ever in the breast,
Yearnings, throbbings of the heart
For a perfect rest and peace?
“Never,” comes the solemn answer,
“Till thy mortal life shall cease.”

Stay, O Time, one instant stay,
Hasting onward in thy way!
Till we, searching, find the art,
Find this perfect rest and peace!
Time replieth, while he sigheth,
“Never can my progress cease.”

Tell us then, wise men and old,
Ye who've searched 'mid truths of gold,
What to us can peace impart?
Tell us, where is perfect rest?
“Ah, we have it not!” they murmur,
“'Tis not found in human breast.”

But the Christian, on his way
To the land of endless day,
Whispers ever, “Trust, O, heart,
All thy toiling shall be blest,
Though on earth no peace is perfect,
Heaven affords eternal rest.”

GUIDING STARS.

SWEET and pure beyond the river
Are the souls that, "watch and wait,"
As we pass, with lingering footsteps,
Toward the grand and glistening gate.

Now and then a sweet note falling
Bids us hasten on our way,
Till the shades that darkly gather
Part before an endless day.

And we see, through mists and shadows,
Glimpses of the robes of white ;
And the wondrous eyes of violet,
Guiding stars toward heavenly light ;

Soul-lit eyes that beam upon us,
Looking downward from above,
Boundless, rapturous glory telling —
Glory of a Savior's love.

A LITTLE WHILE.

A LITTLE while, and yet how long it seems
When trials hang above us like a cloud ;
When, rudely roused from fancy's sweetest dreams,
We hear the call to conflict sounding loud.

A little while of care, mistakes and pain,
A little while of dreaming earth is fair,
A time of sunshine, and a time of rain,
We pass in coming here, and going there.

We clasp the hands of loved ones very fast,
But soon, too soon, alas ! with heavy hearts,
Upon dear faces we must look our last,
And say farewell, despite the tear that starts.

We cling to earthly dreams as if for aye
We could retain the pleasures that we seek ;
We gather flowers of hope from day to day,
We see them droop and fade from week to week.

And, oh ! how often, as the swift years glide,
Our souls forget 'tis but a little while ;
Forget our hope through Christ the Crucified,
And seek instead the world's alluring smile.

O Little While, how very great art thou,
In which we find our Savior, Prince of Peace ;
Then let us each improve this little *now*,
Before its final hours from time shall cease.

COME OVER THE WAY.

THE trees in mantles scant and torn,
Through which the winds of autumn blow,
Like wanderers look, who stand forlorn,
Outside the genial firelight's glow.

Tonight, in yonder glowing west,
A hundred clouds are golden bright;
But on the elms no glimmers rest,
No sunset hues of changeful light.

Beneath those sombre trees I go,
And see that glory slowly fade;
It leaves the streams that gayly flow,
It leaves the hills and leaves the glade.

A voice, as morning bird-song sweet,
Then breaks upon the twilight gray;
My heart with joy begins to beat
At these fond words — "Come o'er the way."

A mendicant, outside the door,
My love no longer shivering goes;
It seeks its friend and stands no more,
Where autumn's chilling north wind blows.

So when life's autumn comes to me,
With falling leaves, and meadows sere,
And wailing, half-clad forest tree,
How sweet a voice divine to hear,—

A loving voice, at close of day,
From one who stands beside the gate,
“Come hither, friend, come o'er the way,
Outside the door no longer wait.”

PRETTY TO ME.

I ENTERED with my friend her cottage door,
And saw a living picture, very fair ;
Her little boy was seated on the floor,
And sunbeams played upon his golden hair ;
His chubby hands at work upon a toy,
His earnest violet eyes brimful of joy.

But oh, that carpet strewn with bits of white !
What grave reproof came from the mother's lips !
Then childish wonder mingled with delight,
For his own hand had made the scattered chips ;
And, then, a little voice in earnest plea,
Said, sweet and low, "They're pretty, ma, to me."

We spend long hours in gathering what we prize ;
Then comes reproof from faithful friendly voice ;
We view our treasures with a strange surprise,
To think our hearts, alone, at them rejoice ;

Tears fill our eyes till we can scarcely see ;
And sad hearts plead, "They're pretty, friend, to me."

Man forms his plans and thinks them very fair ;
But God looks down and kindly says, "Not so."
'The doubting soul is torn by anxious care,
And all life's joys seem changing into woe ;
Before his Father, on his bended knee,
He murmurs low, "They're pretty, Lord, to me."

We look, at length, on life's most pressing needs ;
Nor heed the trifles, scattered round us, more ;
But climbing, slowly, where the pathway leads,
We try to follow Jesus gone before ;
And pray, O Father, grant our joys may be,
Not what is fair to us, but fair to thee.

IN TRUST IS REST.

OH, hearts that ache because of grief,
Oh, hearts that yearn for true relief ;
Ye cannot find it in the gloom
That hovers round your loved one's tomb.
Why look upon the new-made mound
And think the cold, relentless ground
Conceals your treasure from your view ?
And why should bitter tears, bedew
The clay that hides the clay alone ?
Long after years and life have flown,
And back the dust has turned to dust,—
A treasure never touched by rust,
A crown of life, a harp of gold,
A refuge sure, a joy untold,
Shall ever be the Christian's right,
Beyond the massive portals bright.
Then trust the hand that lifts the rod,
And feel all's well that pleases God ;
So shall he soothe thy troubled breast
And bring thee home to endless rest.

BE TRUE TO GOD.

WHATEVER the world may say or do,
In your life and soul to God be true ;
For the world may laugh, or the world may chide,
But it cannot take you from Jesus' side,
Or take your Savior away from you.
And what the world says, as the years glide past,
Will die away like the wintry blast.

ICE-BOUND.

AT eve, ice-bound, the land lay crystal clad ;
The forest branches, bowing slow and sad,
To rising west winds fondly sighed and moaned ;
'Neath cold weights bending, old gray fences groaned ;
The sun's last beams just touched with crimson glow
The hillside covered o'er with brown herbs low ;
Alone, unfettered, ocean's long waves rolled,
And all was bright, without, but drear and cold.
The cold night nearer crept, and laid its hand
On cottage windows ; but the household band
Drew near the fire that lit the twilight gloom
And filled, with tender warmth, the cosy room ;
And said, " Though all without be cold and drear,
If death come not, within is merry cheer."

At eve the small flowers close their tender leaves,
The west wind, softly for their fragrance grieves,
The forests lightly wave their branches fair,
The ocean glistens in the sunset glare ;
The world is beautiful without and sweet
As if arrayed for holy angel's feet.
The cool winds kiss the cottage as they pass,
And sport around it in the tender grass ;
They seek the darkened chamber and their breath
Rests on the lids of eyes grown cold in death ;
Around the tiny form they gently play,
They lift the ringlets, and then steal away ;
While on the breeze a mourning wail is heard,
And, as we listen, while with sorrows stirred,
We hear the words, " Though all without is bright,
The heart is chill as winter's frost-bound night."

ALONE IN THE VALLEY.

I RESTED alone on the hillside,
Beneath the thick shadow of trees,
While to me strange teachings of fancy
Seemed borne by each whispering breeze.

I thought that I stood by a valley
And heard a low sorrowing tone,
And these were the words that were uttered,
“I pass down the valley alone.”

What valley, mysterious and dreadful,
Was this that lay near at my side?
And should I in days that were coming,
Adown it in loneliness glide?

Again that low voice in the distance
Was heard, till it died in a moan;
A soul-voice, that wailed in its anguish,
“I pass down the valley alone.”

I heard the deep roll of a river —
I dreamt that I knew it was death —
That carries away on its waters
The light of the eye, and the breath.

And is there no guide through the valley,
No wise one who knoweth the way

That leads to the gateway of heaven,
Through the valley so grim and so gray?

There came a glad whisper, responding
In earnest, inspiriting tone,
"Each soul may have Jesus to guide it,
Nor pass down the valley alone."

The one whom I heard in the darkness,
Uncheered by a guide or a light,
Alas ! had resisted the Savior,
And was lost in the gloom of the night.

Once more on the hillside, at sunset,
A soft golden glory was thrown ;
But I thought of the woe of a spirit
That goes down that valley alone.

BERTHA'S STORY.

BERTHA, happy blue-eyed darling,
Rests her arms upon my knee,
Pleading, "Auntie, tell a story,
Tell a new one, made for me."

"Not now, Bertha," comes the answer,
But the words I do not speak,
For I see a pretty dimple
On each softly rounded cheek.

Two bright eyes are full of laughter,
Under forehead broad and white ;
And the tangled flaxen ringlets
Shimmer in the sunset light.

Baby fingers, clasped together,
Rosy-tinted, soft and fair,
Bring a thought of little fingers
That are placed with tender care ;

Not, as Bertha's colored richly
Like a shell from foreign lands,
But as white as are the rosebuds
Nestled in the waxen hands.

Ah ! that dainty face, reproaching,
And those lips that asking smiled !

How could I refuse a story,
To the pretty, coaxing child ?

“ Shall it be of birds, or fairies,
Or of dogs, with carts to draw ? ”
“ No, not these, but tell me, auntie,
Of some little girl you saw.”

“ Riding home from Boston, darling,
On a chilly autumn day,
In the cars, I saw a maiden
Clad in cloak of softest gray,

“ Dress of warmest crimson cashmere,
Crimson hood upon her head,
Trimmed with down and snow-white feathers,
Sitting all alone, she said ;

“ So I took the seat beside her
Asking her her name to tell.
‘ My name’th Ella, that’th my father,
And my thister. Her name’th Belle.’

“ ‘ Thank you, dear,’ and then I noticed
She had brought her dolly, too,
So I told her of my Bertha,
For she made me think of you.

“ And I said you wished a dolly,
New, and clean, and finely dressed,

Adding, ' Shall I get it, Ella,
Do you think it would be best ? '

" Ella looked at me a minute,
Pushing back her crimson hood,
Then she answered, very slowly,
' Thome-time, yeth, if she ith good.'

" And I brought the dolly to you,
When I reached my home that night ;
'Tis the one with golden tresses,
Blue-eyed Alice dressed in white."

" Thank you, auntie," and the ringlets
Nestled closer to my breast,
As the last faint flush of sunset,
Lingered, fading, in the west.

Then my darling said the prayer,
" Now I lay me down to sleep,"
Lisping out the child's petition,
That the Lord her soul would keep.

In her snowy bed I left her,
And my heart sent forth a prayer,
Bless the little children, Father,
Guard them with thy tender care.

MERRY CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS bells ring silvery music
O'er the crystal snow,
Mingling with the songs and memories
Of the long ago.
Hearts are glowing, and the trampings
Of the restless feet
Beat, in quickened time, their marches
Through the busy street ;
Merry, merry Christmas !
Ring the voiceful bells ;
Merry, merry Christmas !
Down the valley swells.

Christmas trees, with treasures loaded,
Bend their branches low,
Yielding gifts which love has fashioned —
May they ever grow !
How the children's faces brighten !
How their voices ring,

In the chorus of the anthem
Which they gaily sing !
 “Merry, merry Christmas !”
 Still their accents call ;
 “Merry, merry Christmas !
 Welcome, one and all.”

When the music all was ended,
And the lights burned low,
Then there came a little maiden
O'er the frozen snow ;
And she found a kindly shelter,
For they bade her stay ;
Heard her story, sad and truthful —
Then again they say,
 “Merry, merry Christmas,
 Truly blest thou art,
Since we have, with kindness,
 Cheered a saddened heart.”

GOLDEN WEDDING.

OVER the years that sped away
Into the past, 'mid shadows gray,—
The fifty years that passed from sight
With summer's heat, and with frosty air,
With golden morns, and with noontide glare,
And peaceful breath of twilight fair,—
We look with hasty glance tonight.

Backward to solemn vows we pass,
Made in the time of springing grass,
And opening buds on forest trees ;
To days when robins and blue-birds sung,
When hope's clear bell with a glad tone rung,
A golden bell that tireless swung
In April's light and joyous breeze.

Deep were life's mysteries hid from sight ;
Many a change of shade and light
Has glided fleet, as seasons flew ;
And, if at times there were cares and pain,
And, if at times there were clouds and rain,
The heavens grew mild and clear again,
And mercies fell like silent dew.

Drop, then, a vail o'er all things sad,
Speaking, alone, in light tones glad ;
 And gather up, with memory's power,
The cherished sound of your children's feet,
Parental love, with its influence sweet,
The after years of life, replete
 With gems that fell — a golden shower.

Then, as the curtain falls once more
Over the dreams and days of yore,
 Rejoice to feel that time's swift flight
Has left behind, at the close of day,
Life's setting sun, with its crimson ray ;
While friends that meet can truly say,
 "Love's priceless boon we give tonight."

Trust, with your robes of purest white,
Bring to this dwelling peace tonight ;
 And grant, O Lord, when life shall fade,
That wide the gates of heaven may swing,
The lofty arches triumphant ring,
And, in that never ending spring,
 Give golden light, undimmed by shade.

MY DREAM.

[Written for a friend after the death of her son.]

IN the depth of night, in the vale of dreams,
With its changeful shadows, its fitful gleams,
In an evening twilight I saw you stand
With your dark eyes raised to the heavenly land ;
And your sad soul uttered a pleading cry,
"I am weary of earth-life, O, let me die !"
Then a change passed over the vision wild,
For you hasted away to your long lost child.
But before you glided within the wall,
To the world you turned at a mournful call,
Where a youthful maiden, with bitter moan,
On the earth was climbing the way alone.
'Twas a lamb that followed her mother's track,
And with plaintive accents she plead, "Come back,
For my feet are small, and the path untried,
And I know not the way up the bleak hillside."
Then an angel of God stood outside the door,
And he said, "You come to this peaceful shore,
But the Lord has laid on your life a care,
'Tis the gentle soul of a maiden fair ;
Have you left her safe amid earthly woe ?"
And you, trembling, answered the spirit, "No."

Then you came once more to this changeful shore
With the boatman pale, who had rowed you o'er ;
And a new peace came, as a gift from God,
With a patient trust 'neath the chastening rod ;
And you sung this song, as you toiled again
Up the rugged pathway of grief and pain, —
“O, Father, though longer or shorter the way,
It leads me at last to an endless day.

Though weary I wait

On the earth below,

Yet sometime I know

Thou wilt open the gate.

And grant me, I pray, in that full tide of joy,
The soul of my daughter with that of my boy.”
Then the angel spoke in a tender tone ;
And, amid the rapture, I woke alone.

FLOATING.

PEACEFUL the moonbeams bright
Fall on the stream,
Sparkling like silver, white,
As fair as a dream.

Whispers the western breeze ;
Softly the dew,
Over the forest trees,
Distilleth anew.

Swiftly our fragile boat
Flits o'er the wave ;
Down the broad stream we float,
Enraptured and brave.

What though some future day
Troubles may bring ;
Borne o'er the dashing spray
We joyously sing.

While we pass forest-shades
On toward the sea,
Gaily the leafy glades
Loud echo our glee.

O'er the dark river
 Tempest-clouds lower ;
No moonbeams quiver
 In this midnight hour.

Still floating, ever
 Seaward we glide ;
Vain all endeavor —
 We drift with the tide.

Pine trees are sighing
 Near on the shore ;
Stern oaks, defying
 The loud tempest's roar.

Tossed on the billows,
 Our songs are still ;
Bends, as the willows,
 Each proud, iron will.

Kneel we in prayer
 In the dark night,
Seeking God's care
 Till morning brings light.

When calmly the morning
 Broke in the east,

The wind, at the dawning,
Its wild wailing ceased.

Thus are we forever
Borne o'er Time's wave,
On Life's broad river,
Till laid in the grave.

THE ARTIST'S AFTER-FAME.

AN artist, with brush and palette,
Had painted a baby face,
With joy in the eyes of azure,
And beauty and tender grace.

Through hours of untiring patience
The work was complete at last ;
The gaze of the skillful toiler
Was joyfully on it cast.

For this will bring commendation ;
It speaks, with its laughing eyes
Alive as with thoughts of angels ;
And grace o'er each feature lies.

But not for the artist's labor
A word of men's praises came ;
And, saddened, he struggled onward,
Till toiling had brought him fame.

For years in his closet hidden,
The picture was laid away ;
The workman had finished his labor,
Grown aged and bowed and gray.

At last in the silent churchyard
He slept in unbroken rest,

Then found they the baby portrait,
With rose buds upon its breast.

The fingers, that held them fondly
Were dimpled and tinted fair ;
And waving o'er snow-white shoulders,
Fell tresses of golden hair.

And, just as the artist formed it
In wearisome years long past,
His toiling and struggling over,
It won the world's praise at last.

OUR SNOW-WHITE FLOWERS.

FAIR, fragile flower, with fragrant breath,
And leaf as white as snow-flake, pure,
One little hour, and cruel death,
That nought so tender can endure
Will breathe on thee
And thou wilt die.

Yet, gazing on thy wax-like form,
Wondering if thou hast not some grief
To know the happy sunbeams, warm,
Will wither soon thy dewy leaf,
We softly say,
“How sad to die !”

I had a friend, with loving heart ;
Pure as the snow-flake, seemed her life,
As if her spirit would impart
An influence sweet, subduing strife.
So like the flowers,
Must she, too, die ?

She passed when all the gorgeous trees
Shook their light leaves upon the earth ;
When chilly blew the autumn breeze,
And sadness mingled with our mirth,
And whispered, low,
“The flowers must die.”

We could not keep our snow-white flower,
Earth was too rude for one so fair,
But, sometime, in our Father's bower,
We shall behold our blossom rare,
Where nevermore
'Twill fade and die.

NOR LOVE, NOR HATE THY LIFE.

["*Nor love thy path nor hate ; but what thou livest, live well.
How long or short permit to Heaven.*"]

LOVE not your path, for stormy clouds
Will often hover near,
And with their swift, o'erwhelming wrath
Cause your faint heart to fear.

There is no pleasure, bright and fair,
But mingles bitter pain,
The joys that cheer our weary hearts
Give place to care again.

And can you love a path like this,
Nor look beyond the grave ?
And when earth's fleeting joys are passed,
No better do you crave ?

Oh, empty trust ! delusion vain !

To build our hopes below,
And seek in worldly gaiety
Our truest joy to know.

Hate not your path, for not in vain

The tempests wildly beat,
If, after clouds and driving rain,
The sun affords its heat.

There is no sorrow, dark and dread,

But mingles hope as well,
When, trusting Christ our hearts to cheer,
To him our griefs we tell.

Ah ! who can hate the rugged road

O'er which our Savior trod ;
Which leads to life and endless day
And perfect peace with God ?

Oh, blessed hope ! and joy how great !

To place our trust above,
While, happy, here we wait and work —
Our sunshine Jesus' love.

Then murmur not, if long or short

Your journey shall be given,
For he who guides your wayworn feet
Prepares your rest in Heaven.

And while along your checkered way,
You pass, 'mid storm and sun ;
So live that you in Heaven may wear
The crown that you have won.

THE ALTAR.

GATHER all the scattered fragments ;
Let us build an altar here.

There are trifles that we prize not,
That we give without a tear ;

Then we wrap our mantles round us,
On our gifts with pride we look ;
And we think, with satisfaction,
God records them in his book !

Yes, he does indeed record them,
And the letters shall not fade ;
“Only trifles from abundance,
On my altar have been laid.”

On another page is written,
“Christ for them on Calvary died.”
What to us is now our offering?
Where our foolish thoughts of pride?

Have we felt one pang of hunger,
One less jewel have we worn,
That the precious love of Jesus
May to heathen lands be borne?

Give the pennies and the trifles,
For, through them, some soul may be
Reconciled to Christ, our Savior,
And rejoice eternally ;

But, in giving, add some treasure ;
Then thy spirit shall be blest
With a deeper love for Jesus,
Welling up within thy breast.

THE PASSING SHIPS.

OVER the waves of thought, that roll
Wild as the sea within the soul ;
Over those billows, dark and deep,
Surging forever in the breast,
Ever the same in midnight's sleep,
Ever the same in day's unrest,
Ships, with their pinions white as snow,
Sail on their voyages to and fro.

Over those waters, wild and vast,
Lightly glides back the hallow'd past ;
Voices of old I hear once more,
Clear as the murmur of the sea,
Breaking and falling on the shore ;
Wavelets that gleam with gladsome glee
Mingling with waves that woeful beat,
Wreathing with foam the cliff's cold feet.

Seaward the ships move down the bay,
Bearing, as thus they pass away,
Back to their far-off, native clime,
Treasures of friendship, love and trust,
Jewels that feel no touch of time,
Gleaming 'mid ores that ne'er can rust.
Peaceful the sunlight's gentle glow
Rests on the waves that outward flow.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

'TWERE pleasant, sung the bard, in flowery June
The sexton's hand my narrow grave should make.
He had his wish. The forests were in tune
With bird-song, brooks, and breezes in the brake,
When, as the oak which wide has spread its shade
Above our childhood, youth, and older years,
Struck by the lightning, falls, and all the glade
Is audible with raindrops, nature's tears,
Our poet died : and teardrops thick as dew
Fell from our eyes and moistened all the land.
Methinks the flowers, the gentian, fringed and blue,
And all the violets and the aster band,
Could they but know of this, would bow their heads,
And every star would glimmer through a cloud,
And brooklets check their haste down rocky beds,
Lest their wild mirth disturb him in his shroud.
He passed from earth 'mid "sunshine of kind looks
And music of kind voices ever nigh."
We bless him for his thoughts expressed in books,
And, "waiting by the gate," farewell ! we cry.
True was his heart in every hour of need.
Therefore, we bring fresh laurel for his tomb ;
And whisper thanks for every noble deed,
And chant farewell, amid the cypress gloom.

NEAR OR FAR.

NEAR, near, so near,
The love we seek through weary years,
That, trusting, knows no change,
And feels no fears!
It trembles on the eyelid moist with tears,
We see it in the smile that lights the face;
But soon we miss again that tender grace,
And sadly sigh, "So near
And yet so far away!"
We catch a glimmer 'mid the shadows gray,
Then starless hours of disappointment teach
That what we seek is just beyond our reach.

Far, far, so far,
The God who made the earth and sky,
And stars that roll and roll,
We know not why!
We hear the thunder of his voice on high
We could not live and look upon his face;
And yet he smiles upon us in his grace.
Our glad hearts thrill, and say,
"He is not far away."
His love streams round us like the sunrise ray;
Though far above us, past the azure sky,
Yet, with the love we long for, he is nigh.

HIDDEN WILES.

O TRUSTING child, with glad, young heart,
How soon that heart will grow
As hard as the sculptor's work of art,
As cold as winter's snow!

The world has many secrets, kept
Beneath her outward smiles,
And all, who on her breast have slept,
She draws by hidden wiles.

And some are pleased with a sounding name,
Who soon grow hard and proud ;
They wreck their souls for worldly fame —
For rank 'mid an earthly crowd.

To some she shows the gleaming gold,
To some, the sparkling bowl ;
Her arms with grace their forms infold,
Her breath corrupts the soul.

And low and lower they sink away,
Who once were pure and true ;
Flowers, drooping dry at close of day,
That bloomed 'mid early dew.

THE DAY-BREAK.

FOREVERMORE, beyond the shining gate,
Where none, for those they love, will need to wait,
Where all the air is filled with music sweet ;
Shall pass the ages, joyful and complete.
No days, no years, shall mark life's onward roll,
No doubts or fears shall fill the weary soul ;
No thrill of pain shall pass from breast to breast
Like tones that strike on distant mountain-crest,
And backward fall, with hollow sounds of woe,
To fill with sadness all the vale below.
In those fair walls life's changes all shall cease,
And we shall dwell in everlasting peace.
As gladly finds his home the long-lost child,
Whose feet have wandered through the lonely wild ;
So we, as heirs with Christ, shall dwell at home,
And never more shall feel a wish to roam.
O, courage, Christian, yet a little while !
Thou soon shalt rest thee in thy Father's smile.
Though here is night, and dark the toilsome way,
The day shall break, the shadows flee away.

CHRIST OUR PEACE.

LOW kneeling on her chamber floor,
A maiden prayed, her sins, forgiven,
Might be remembered never more
Upon the record kept in Heaven.

And as she sought, with earnest plea,
For help to live each day aright,
On Calvary's cross she seemed to see
Her Savior hang ; and, at the sight,

She cried, in anguish deep and strong,
'Twas for my sins this blood was shed ;
For me Christ suffered all this wrong,
Meek as a lamb to slaughter led :

Then seemed to hear the Savior say,
In tones compassionate and kind,
“Forgive them, Father, this I pray,
Through ignorance their eyes are blind.”

In vision fair, she saw him rise
Far up above this world of sin,
Above the soft and azure skies,
Through gates of pearl to enter in.

Then all life's loads she strove to bear,
And ev'ry cross of Christ to know,

While, turning to her earthly care,
She sang in accents sweet and low, —

“There is a land mine eye hath seen,
In visions of enraptured thought,
So bright that all which spreads between
Is with its radiant glory fraught.”

Months passed to years and yet again
We see her bow, on bended knee,
To plead that Christ would her sustain
In passing through affliction’s sea.

Her friends had left her, one by one ;
Their forms were laid in earth to rest,
Till, of them all, there lingered none
To cheer and make her pathway blest.

She thought how Christ was left alone,
Within the garden dark and drear ;
She heard him say in gentle tone,
“When thou art weak then am I near,

“My strength can make thy weakness strong ;
My love can give thee lasting peace.”
And to her lips there comes this song,
While from her heart her murm’rings cease :

“Upon that calm and blissful shore
There rests no shadow, falls no stain ;

There those who meet shall part no more,
And those long parted meet again."

Thus was her heart revived, by grace
Sent from the hand of God above ;—
His love shone forth from out her face ;
She sought the ark, like Noah's dove ;

And looking up to streets of gold,
And peaceful rest on Heaven's fair shore ;
She sang once more the tune of old,
The words she oft had sung before :

"There sweeps no desolating wind
Across that calm, serene abode ;
The wanderer there a home may find,
Within the Paradise of God."

THE OLD MAN AT THE GRAVE.

WITHIN the church-yard, near an humble mound,
An old man paused and slowly gazed around ;
Then raised his hand and wiped the falling tear,
And sadly murmured : " Thus are all things here :
There are no birds, no springing flowers, no trees,
But yield to time, and vanish as the breeze ;
No monuments that always shall endure
The touch of ages, standing strong and sure.
Yon massive cliff, with lofty summits gray,
By slow degrees must crumble to decay.
Our cherished friends, the treasures of the breast,
Glide swift away. We lay them down to rest
Where the light willow, weeping, whispers low,
And winds of night wail songs of saddest woe.
Our youth is gone, and we are bowed and old,
Our vision faded and our hopes grown cold,
While near the grave, with failing feet, we stand,
And wait the summons of the stern command,
" Go in the path thy fathers' feet have trod ;
Pass thou from earth up to the bar of God."

IF I HAD WINGS.

MY prison bars I beat :
I long to fly,
And breathe the sweet pure air
Up in the sky.

I sing my little song
To call my mate ;
And I have sung it long,
But still I wait.

Hear how its yearning fills
The morning fair ;
Hear how its warbling thrills
On evening air.

Will no one open wide
The door to me ;
And say, "Thou long hast cried,
Thou now art free ?"

So sang my little bird ;
My listening ear
Its tender pathos heard,
Its sorrow drear.

I opened wide the door ;
I said, " Thou'rt free ;
But sing a song once more —
One song for me."

He sang a song so clear
I hear it still ;
On memory's tuneful ear
Its sweet notes thrill.

Then, spreading wide his wings,
He took his flight :
No more for me he sings
In morning's light ;

No more, at close of day,
As twilight falls,
In pleading, plaintive lay
His mate he calls.

Yet, I am glad to know
The bird is free,
If he is happier so
Than here with me.

I only think, at eve,
I, too, would fly ;
Far in my upward way,
Would seek the sky ;
Would pass beyond the view
Of earthly things,
Above the ether blue ;
If I had wings.

INDIAN SUMMER.

AROUND the lonely farmhouse eaves,
Grown old and gray 'neath touch of time,
The woodbine clings, with crimson leaves
That blush beneath the autumn rime.

Upon the forest-mantled hills
Here red, there golden glow the trees ;
The naiads' songs, from rippling rills,
In tender murmurs woo the breeze.

The ocean echoes back the notes
In wild, deep tone of music grand,
That, rising from its bosom, floats
Afar o'er all the list'ning land.

Calm Neptune chides each angry wave
That landward moves, with sullen roar ;
All stay their wrath, and lightly lave
The long extent of sandy shore.

And, purple tinged in sunset light,
Far off the mountain-headland seems
As fair, to our enraptured sight,
As Blessed Islands seen in dreams.

The haughty ships, with wide-spread sails,
Toward golden clouds their course pursue,
Then, borne away by gentle gales,
Pass down the west beyond our view.

Along the winding country road
The farmer slowly wends his way,
Bears home his final harvest load
As fades the blush of parting day.

I would that in the mellow light,
Of life's mild Indian summer days,
Before the darkness of the night,
While all is tinged with sunset rays, —

I, too, might wend the homeward road,
The labor of a life-time past,
And bear my final harvest load,
And sing my harvest home at last.

FAREWELL.

BREATH of the dewy spring,
Tender, and soft, and low,
Whisper not notes of woe ;
Bear on thy lightsome wing,
Glad tidings to and fro.

Why should thy breathings be
Sad in the sombre pine ?
While the young buds are thine,
Opening on hedge and tree,
Why should thy voice repine ?

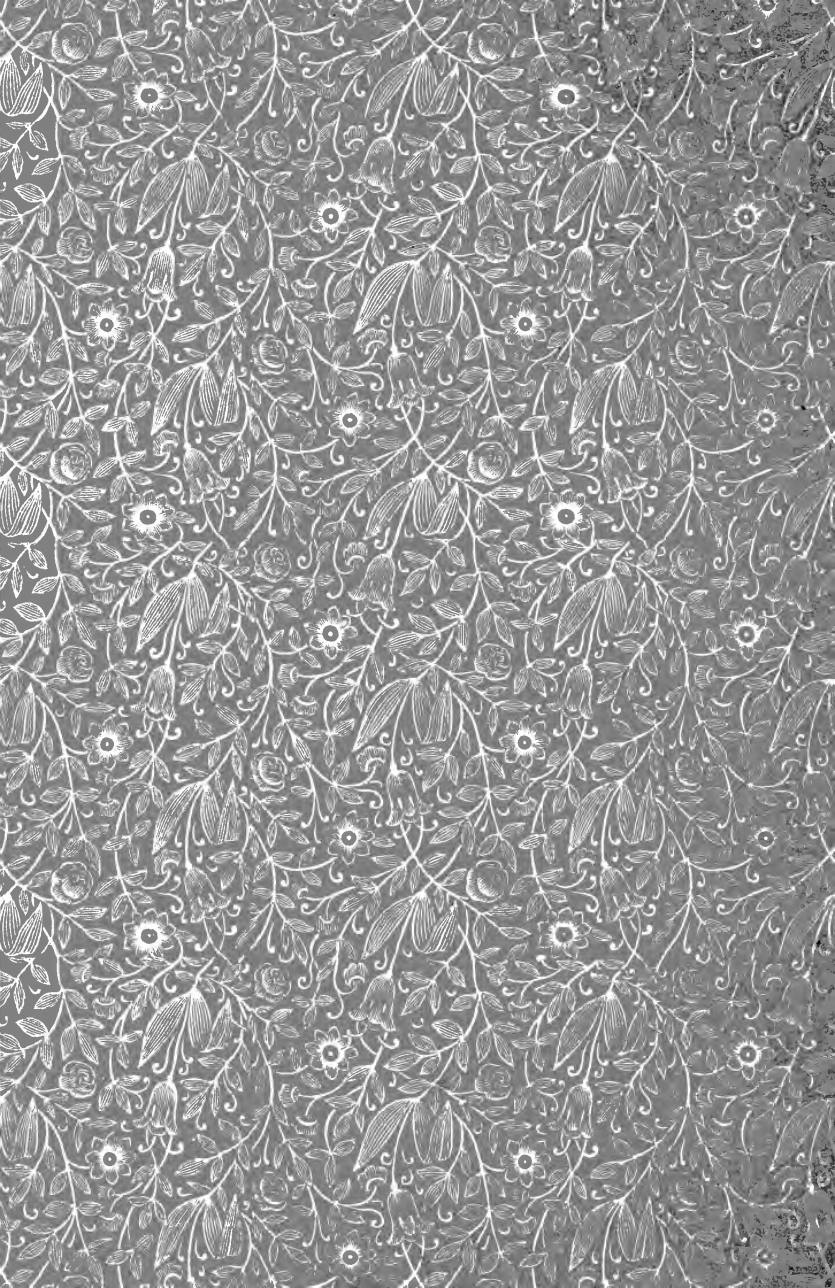
Autumn is time to weep,
Autumn with drooping flowers ;
Leafless its faded bowers
Back to corruption creep,
Emblem of earthly powers.

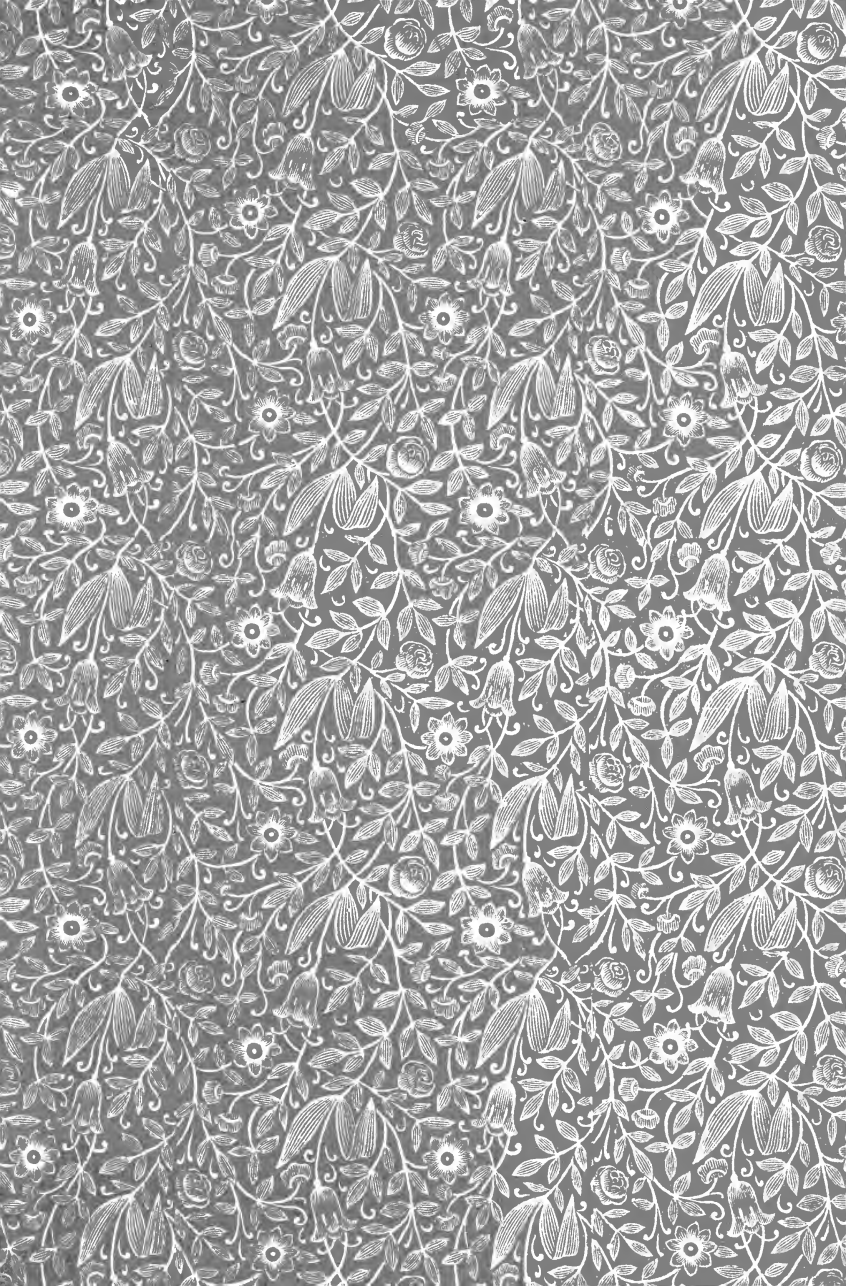
Echo of "Fare thee well,"
Falls with relentless tone ;
Wilder the soft notes swell,
Wailing adown the dell ;
Ever farewell they moan.











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